



A PERILOUS MOMENT.

REMARKABLE ADVENTURES

FROM

REAL LIFE.



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NOTE.

THE papers composing this book have appeared in various volumes of "THE LEISURE HOUR" and "SUNDAY AT HOME." With a few exceptions, the sources of which are indicated, the "Adventures" were communicated as true incidents by correspondents known to the Editor. While affording interesting reading, especially for the young, they will be found to convey useful information about many lands. Most of the narratives have the higher purpose of impressing on the mind the reality of an overruling Providence; and some of them present, in an attractive form, lessons of Christian faith and duty.

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REMARKABLE ADVENTURES FROM REAL LIFE.

MY ADVENTURES WITH GRISLY BEARS IN CALI- FORNIA AND OREGON.

THE first time I ever saw a grisly bear was in the British Museum. Of course he was dead and stuffed, and presented the usual door-mat and melancholy appearance peculiar to stuffed animals. I was very young then, and little thought I should ever encounter him in a more dangerous aspect.

Every traveller in California hears more or less of "grislies," and many and wonderful are the "stiff yarns" told by old hunters and trappers up at the mines; but I am not now going to repeat what I have heard. This is a true narrative, and I purpose simply to relate my own unvarnished experiences.

IN California, which is a strange country, one is often obliged to take to strange and unusual pursuits to earn a living. I know that I had to do so. One of my occupations, during the time I dwelt there, was that of a boatman in the harbour. In conjunction with another young adventurer, I owned a large boat; and when not engaged with freight or passengers, we often used to take a trip across the bay, some twelve miles in distance, load with timber, which we procured by felling trees in the wood that fringed the shore, transport it to San Francisco, and dispose of it to the shop-

keepers there. At that time wood was the only fuel to be obtained in the city. As these expeditions often consumed a couple of days and a night, we had constructed a rude shanty in the wood, close to the shore, under which we slept. This shanty, or hut, was formed simply of boughs of trees, etc., and only boasted of three walls, the fourth being supplied by our fire, which we regularly lighted at night and kept burning till morning. One night, about nine o'clock, we were extended on our blankets in the shanty, just on the point of dropping into that deep and dreamless sleep which labour alone earns, when our ears were suddenly saluted by a deep and prolonged roar, evidently proceeding from some distance in the woods.

"That's a bear," said my mate.

"It is," said I.

With this short dialogue our conversation ceased, and my companion turned over and seemed to go to sleep, but I could not. All the terrible stories of grisly bears which I had ever heard began to catalogue themselves in my imagination with most unpleasant vividness, and I reflected moodily on the trifling defence we could command should a bear attack us. His rush would bring down the walls of our poor little shanty about our ears, and our only arms were two short guns and a brace of bowie knives—poor weapons of defence in such a serious encounter.

Thus an hour passed away, and I lay glancing alternately at the fire and out into the woods through the chinks of our shanty (for it was a lovely moonlight night), when again presently a roar deeper, and certainly nearer, rang upon the silent night air, and my companion suddenly sat up. Like me, he had only been pretending sleep, and had not cared to explain his fears. Now he spoke, and said, "Do you think it's safe here?"

"No, I don't," I rejoined; and, the ice being broken, we simultaneously sprang to our feet and looked around. Nothing living

was in sight; but again a roar unpleasantly near made itself heard to our listening ears. We took the hint, and in two minutes we had packed up our traps, and were racing down to the boat, some two hundred yards distant. Hastily launching her, we put a good hundred yards between us and the shore, and anchored. Throwing ourselves under the thwart of the boat, we made ourselves as comfortable as circumstances would permit, and snoringly emulated the growlings of the bear, soon after we had stretched ourselves on the hard planks.

We were awakened in a few hours by a fresh alarm. All in a moment, as it seemed, though it must have taken place gradually, my mate rolled violently on the top of me. As, I suppose, my mind had been filled all night with dreamy visions of grisly bears, I concluded, on being thus abruptly awakened, that I was assaulted by one of them, and instantly I grappled with my foe, who grappled with me in return. It took a minute or two to satisfy each of us that the hug in which we found ourselves locked was human instead of ursine. With a laugh we released each other, and then discovered the cause of the accident. The fact was, while we slept, the tide had run out, and we were high and dry. Of course, as the water left us, our boat heeled over, till at last she lay on her side, and, as I was to leeward of my companion, he rolled down upon me. With no good feelings towards the bear tribe in general, we propped up our boat again to a level keel, and betook ourselves once more to slumber, not awaking till the sun rose bright and cheerful in the blue unclouded Californian sky.

Such was my first distant introduction to a grisly bear. At a later period, I was cruising about the Bay of San Francisco, in a ship's long-boat, with three or four sailors, in search of any "wreck" (or "flotsam," as our old statutes would call it), such as building-piles or spars of vessels, that we might chance to come across. Sometimes these expeditions were successful, at other

times a failure. I remember once, after a severe easterly gale, we picked up a number of valuable articles, evidently from the wreck of some unfortunate vessel. Amongst the spoil was a cask of lime juice, and another cask of preserved eggs, for which we obtained the several prices of fifty and one hundred and thirty dollars—sums which, in English money, are together equivalent to about 38*l*. The latter may seem a large price; but it is necessary to remember that at that time—namely, in 1849—provisions of all kinds were fearfully expensive, especially eggs, which were very scarce.

But to continue my narrative. I have said that we were sailing about the harbour in search of wreck, and, as often happened, night closed upon us when we were a long way from home. I believe the Bay of San Francisco is some thirty miles in length; so, according to our custom, we made for the nearest land, anchored our boat, and went ashore. In what particular portion of the bay we were situated, none of us knew or cared. It seemed a somewhat desolate spot, as far as we could discern through the dark and drear autumn night. However, our requisites for camping—namely, wood and water—were easily procured, and in a few minutes a capital fire sent forth its cheerful blaze and genial heat. Then our blankets, fryingpan, kettle, etc., were brought ashore, and in a short time our preparations for supper were complete. The kettle was singing on the embers, the fryingpan was spluttering away with the rashers, and the wave-worn wreckers were seated in a row, gazing with hungry and anxious faces on the approaching “feed;” when suddenly a dark and formidable-looking object emerged from the gloom of night in the landward direction, and advanced slowly towards our fire.

“A bear, and a grisly one,” shouted the American we had with us, as we all started to our feet. That was enough. *Sauve qui peut* was the order of the day. Resistance was not for a moment thought of. Supper and our traps were in an instant abandoned,

and pell-mell we rushed down to the beach, and never looked behind till we were fairly in the boat and getting the anchor up. Then, what a sight greeted us! There sat our grisly enemy on his haunches, gazing with the greatest nonchalance into the glowing embers of the fire—our fire—and evidently enjoying the pleasant warmth, while we were shivering in the cold. Slowly and sadly we got up our anchor; more slowly and more sadly still, we placed our oars in the rowlocks and “gave way,” in a very melancholy mood; but as our boat struck out on her course, our eyes were still fixed on the receding shore, where the fire still blazed brightly, where the bear still sat on his haunches gazing into the blaze, and where our supper was by this time nearly ready for his hungry maw, by us uneaten.

Now, perhaps, some gallant volunteer reading this, would consider that in this last affair, like the former one, the white feather was shown by the writer and his companions; but our volunteer would be mistaken. To cope with a grisly bear a good rifle and a good rifleman are absolutely essential. The rifleman must also be a first-rate hunter, accustomed to kill large game; for the sport is intensely dangerous, as it is only in one or two places that a wound can be inflicted which would prove instantaneously mortal on this toughest of monsters; and, should the shot fail, the hunter would have no time to load again ere the beast would be upon him. Hardy trappers and hunters in the prairie shrink alone from a conflict with the grisly bear; and the Indian brave who prevails over him advances a greater step in the estimation of Indian chivalry, than if he had taken three scalps from human foes in a fair stand-up fight.

After I had been a denizen of California for some two years, business compelled me to take my departure for the neighbouring State of Oregon. When my affairs in that state were arranged, I determined to travel back overland to San Francisco, in company

with a mule train proceeding there—no slight journey, as it embraced a distance of some thousand miles, not exactly over a macadamized road. On the contrary, mounted on good horses, we followed a slight Indian “trail,” scarcely ever of more importance than a sheep track, and oftentimes quite obliterated. I shall, however, avoid a long digression of describing how we climbed mountains, forded rivers, and skirted precipices, and how we more than once had perilous skirmishes with Indians. The grisly bear is my theme, and it devolves upon me now simply to relate how a third time I came into juxtaposition with this formidable foe.

After travelling very hard for a week or so, we found ourselves one night camped on the banks of the Rogue river, one of the rivers of Oregon, where gold has since been discovered; and, as our cattle were rather in a poor condition, we resolved to give them a rest by camping all the next day. Feeling myself, in the course of that day, inclined for a gentle ride, towards the afternoon I saddled my horse, a good specimen of Indian breed, which I had bought from a Pawnee chief. Taking my rifle across my saddle-bags, I set off to see whether I could get a shot at an elk—a species of deer commonly called wapiti, which abound in that region. I rode out from camp, and, after cantering some four or five miles, came to the end of the little prairie on which we were camped, and got into broken ground, well wooded, and with a thick growth of “chapparal,” that is, “underwood.”

Moving along at a slow amble, and keeping a good look-out for game, and also for any lurking Indian—for we were now on hostile ground—I suddenly felt my horse tremble under me, and rapidly quicken his pace to a slashing gallop. Looking to my right hand, to my intense astonishment, and I may say fear, I beheld a monstrous bear, evidently an old grisly, rising from his lair beneath a tree.

In a moment I knew he would pursue me, for I had “crossed

his wind." This requires explanation; but I had often been told by hunters of experience that this species of bear does not attack men if they pass sideways or in his rear, but should they, on the other hand, pass to windward, he is instantly exasperated and gives chase. Whether this statement is fanciful or not, I am sorry to say that in my case it proved too true; for in another instant the grisly seemed to have made up his mind, and was advancing towards us in full pursuit.

Now, had I been upon the prairie, I should have cared little for my foe. I knew my horse, and though he was of Indian breed, as I have said before, he was remarkably fleet in his gallop; and the grisly bear, though his speed, especially for a short time, is not to be despised, is certainly no match for a fleet horse on a level; but then, in this case the brushwood was very heavy, and only to be passed by a succession of small leaps, fearfully delaying at a time like this, while my pursuer's heavy body crushed indifferently through bush and briar. With the end of my lasso, my spur, and voice, I urged on my terrified horse. The rein with Indian horses is of little avail; they do not understand the bit, and in a case of emergency it is better not to make much use of it. My poor horse, however, required neither of these inducements to do his best. His Indian instincts had told him that a dreaded foe was at hand, and nobly did he strain every nerve to save himself and his rider. With one eye upon our course, I regarded at intervals our dreadful pursuer. Infinitely quicker than it takes to write it, I at once appreciated the desperate nature of the situation. In the first place, I saw that in our relative speed my horse was much inferior to our enemy, and that he was nearing us fast, owing, as I said before, to the broken ground. Unless, then, I could gain the edge of the prairie in a comparatively short period, a death struggle must inevitably ensue. But then I calculated, in the second place, that I must be at least a mile from the prairie, that wished-

for refuge, and at less than half that distance I should be overtaken. True, I had my rifle in my hand, and my revolver in my belt, both loaded. I might fire at our foe. A moment's reflection convinced me that at present it would be a useless attempt. Even were I standing on firm footing, I might not succeed in sending a ball into any vulnerable part of the bear. But a flying shot from the saddle—it was simply absurd to attempt it. A thousand to one it would have proved a failure. I determined, then, to reserve my fire till we should be at close quarters, a contingency that, sad to say, appeared most unpleasantly imminent; for in spite of all my horsemanship, and the gallant efforts of my Indian steed, a space of hardly twenty yards now intervened between pursuer and pursued. The moment, then, was approaching for action. Dropping my useless reins on my horse's neck, I examined carefully the cap of my rifle, opened the flap of the case of my revolver, and by a glance assured myself that my "Green River Knife" (the best make of bowie knives) was in its usual place—my boot. Then I carefully threw back the heavy folds of the Mexican poncho I wore, to leave my arms free to hold my rifle. As I did so, an idea struck me. In a moment I had slipped my head out of the poncho, and had it in my hands, allowing it to flutter to the full extent of its folds. Then I released it from my grasp, and it fell, as I designed, between my horse and our enemy.

My stratagem was successful; in the midst of his wild career the bear suddenly pulled up at the sight of the fallen mantle, and stood over it examining it curiously. Well was it for me that in my younger days I had been a keen reader of travels and adventures, and by that means become possessor of the little stratagem that had perhaps saved my life. I again seized my abandoned reins, and with voice and spur urged on my panting steed. It was well I did so. After a few seconds' delay, which, however, enabled me to put an interval of perhaps a hundred yards between us, my ruthless

foe again resumed his pursuit. Again he had the advantage in speed. In vain was all my horsemanship; in vain did I sacrifice my Mexican sombrero, by throwing it to mother earth, devoutly hoping it would have the same effect as the poncho. It was useless. Bruin passed it with contempt; he was not to be "done" a second time.

On went the chase, and again did I have the mortification of seeing the space between us gradually diminish, and my fate but a question of minutes. As this direful conviction forced itself with irresistible power on my mind, even at the very next moment a ray of hope burst upon me. I cast a despairing glance a-head, and to my intense relief saw the ground was getting clearer. I was close to the edge of the prairie. I shouted aloud in exultation; for, as the ground got more and more unencumbered, my horse drew gradually a-head: A few seconds sufficed to double the space that intervened between us and our foe. A few minutes, and we had gained a full hundred yards. Hurrah! A few hundred yards more, and we shall be safe—safe on the prairie. At this moment a stumble and a crash ensued. A thousand lights danced before my eyes. My sorely-pressed Indian steed had lost his foothold on the polished surface of a prostrate barked pine tree, and together we had come headlong to the ground. Half stunned by the fall, nevertheless I scrambled to my feet in a second, and seized my rifle, which lay uninjured close at hand, and looked around. My poor horse still lay where he fell, snorting piteously with fear. Intuitively I felt there was not time to raise him and mount ere our enemy would be upon us. There was but one hope now remaining: it was to fight for it. Sternly and gloomily I mentally accepted the alternative, and with a throbbing heart but a steady eye and firm wrist, with my rifle at my shoulder, with my back against a tree, I waited for my foe. I had not to wait long. On he came; for a moment I thought he hesitated which to attack—

my steed or myself. I confess, in that moment of peril I sincerely wished he would single out the former, who lay some ten yards distant from me; but it was not to be. Slightly diverging, the bear charged full upon me. I knew my life depended upon the accuracy of my first shot; if it failed, I should hardly have time to draw forth my revolver for another.

When but ten yards lay between us, and he was gathering himself up for the final spring, I took careful aim between the eyes, and fired. A crash, a hideous growl, a second of intense suspense, the smoke lifted, and I alone stood erect. The hideous, gigantic form of my adversary lay prostrate on the ground, a nervous twitching of the limbs alone betraying that life had not yet departed. With a cry of triumph I rushed upon him to administer the *coup de grace*. Madman that I was! in that moment of exultation I lost my presence of mind and neglected to reload my trusty rifle. I did not even draw my revolver, but with insensate wildness clubbed my rifle, and struck the monster over his adamantine head. Contemptible idea! the stock of my rifle was shattered by the blow, and but the barrel remained in my hand. The blow I had directed on the head of my adversary was simply reviving. It had the effect that a dose of hartshorn has in a fainting fit—it brought him to. He had been only stunned by the ball. Grim, ghastly, and bleeding, he rose to his feet and confronted me. A pang of surprise and remorse at my own gross stupidity shot painfully across my heart. Fortunately, in that moment of horror I remained cool. With the speed of thought, I had drawn and cocked my revolver and ensconced myself behind a tree. With weak and faltering steps, but still with fast renewing strength, my opponent charged down to my tree. I stepped aside, which caused him to make a slight detour; and at this instant I fired a chamber of my revolver. He did not drop, but, raising himself on his hind legs, he threw himself upon me. I awaited

him in desperate calmness, though at this moment he presented a terrific spectacle, with glaring eyes, grinning tusks, and tongue dropping foam and blood. Almost I felt his hot breath on my cheek, when I again fired point-blank at his head. The next instant a blow from his fore paw knocked the weapon from my hand; that effort, however, was his last. With trembling joy, I saw his huge carcass sink to the earth, and his life departed in one indescribable growl of rage and pain.

With a thankful heart for so wonderful a deliverance, I now went to raise my poor steed to his feet, and rode into camp, where, amid many an ejaculation of astonishment, I told my tale, and exhibited my trophy in the shape of the skin, of which I had denuded my dead antagonist.

Such was my last interview with the tribe of grislies. When I say my *last* interview, I cannot quite literally make the assertion. "Again we met," but in a much more pleasant fashion for myself. Dining one day at Delmonico's, the famous restaurant of Montgomery Street, San Francisco, I observed on the table, in company with several comestibles unknown to civilized gourmands of the old country—such as flying squirrel, racoon, etc.—a portion of my ancient enemy; and I must confess that I ate a piece of him with a certain peculiar gusto. My vindictive feeling, however, was punished, for I had a most unpleasant attack of indigestion afterwards. I lay down my pen, and conclude with the parting remark, that I should advise any one who places a due and proper value on his life, to avoid the least intimacy, unless caged, or stuffed, with the far-famed monster of the far west—the grisly bear.

STOPPED ON THE HIGHWAY.

It was in the fall of the year 1838 that I set out from home late one evening to walk a distance of twelve miles into the country. It was for the greater part a solitary journey; and to add to its discomfort the absence of the moon rendered the night very dark, whilst a thick drizzling rain commenced shortly after my leaving, and continued throughout the whole length of my lonely way. Having no companion to cheer the solitude, I had only my own thoughts to beguile the tediousness. It was a road, too, that was occasionally attended with some danger to foot travellers; but I was on the Lord's work, and feeling assured that his presence is always nigh, and that without his permission no evil can befall his servants, "nor a hair of their head fall unto the ground," I gathered courage; and committing myself to his gracious care, proceeded through the thick darkness, which so effectually excluded objects from view that I could scarcely distinguish the form of the umbrella which I carried for protection from the rain.

At the present date, the locality is much improved, and where there was then only the highway with its cross-roads, persons have now the advantages of the railway, with its facilities and comforts. But I was well acquainted with the route, and had therefore not much difficulty in finding my way; whilst I had plenty of occupation for my thoughts in the important errand on which I was going, having on the next day to preach in a small town and an adjacent village—the former being the place of my present destination.

It may not be out of place to state here that in the earlier periods of my ministerial life, my duties entailed much hard work, and many long journeys on foot—so that, to walk twenty miles in the day and to preach two or three times was a weekly custom; but happily I was equal to my work; though after a few years I

found my strength yielding to the great tax upon it, and my health also began to suffer, owing to weariness and frequent exposure to the severity of the weather.

I had proceeded about ten miles of my journey safely, and with no material impediment beyond what the extreme darkness naturally caused, with the unfavourable state of the roads, which in many parts had become very miry; whilst, where the trees overhung, the large drops battered heavily and rather dismally upon the umbrella, which in fact had a long while continued to shoot off a plentiful discharge of water from every point.

I was absorbed in thought, which the stillness of the night (it being nearly eleven o'clock) served to favour; when suddenly I heard a slight rustling sound somewhere near, which attracted my whole attention for the moment. Before I could form an opinion as to its cause, and whether it might not proceed from some strayed horse or bullock, which certainly I should not have wished to come into contact with, I was startled by the voice of a man from the opposite side of the road, authoritatively calling to me and bidding me instantly to "stop there."

Surprised at this unexpected interruption, and somewhat alarmed by a sense of danger, my first impulse was, mentally, to call unto the Lord to help and protect me; then, shutting my umbrella, by an extraordinary sort of impulse I went over towards the spot whence the voice came; when, to my horror, I perceived a man jumping down from the hedge upon me, with a large bludgeon in his hand, which he instantly upraised, as if intending by a blow therewith to fell me to the ground.

I immediately spoke to him; and in as calm a manner as I could assume, requested to know what he wanted of me, and why he had stopped me on the public road.

He at first gave me no answer, but stood before me with the stick still elevated in the air, which I every moment feared and

expected he would bring down with a violence that perhaps might inflict some grievous, or it might be mortal, injury. It was a critical moment. But although I could not in the least have competed with my antagonist, I was enabled to feel a degree of composure which at the time surprised my mind: it was certainly the result of humble dependence on Divine protection.

As I said, the man kept the stick raised, as if intending to strike; but from some peculiar cause it appeared he either hesitated in his purpose or was altogether unnerved.

In the meanwhile I was emboldened to repeat my question, and, without manifesting timidity, expressed a hope that he would not attempt to injure me. He then answered, "No, I won't harm you."

"Then, pray put down the stick," I said; but he did not, and I repeated my request: "Do remove that stick from over my head, and I will believe you."

"I do not mean to hurt you," he answered; "I would not, for I know you."

Surprised at this statement—for I had no idea how it was possible I could be known to him, neither of us being able, by reason of the darkness of the night, to distinguish each other's features—I said, "Know me, do you? Why, how is it possible *you* should have any knowledge of me?"

"I do know you," he again averred.

"Then who am I?"

"You are the minister of ——."

"Pray how do you make that out?" I said.

"Why, sir," he answered in a subdued manner, while he put the stick down by his side, "I once heard you preach at ——, and just now when you spoke, though I could not see who you were, I knew you again by your voice; so I would not harm you."

This singular disclosure both surprised and pleased me, and

therefore, feeling all apprehension removed from my mind, I began to go on my way again, saying to the man: "I am indeed the person you describe, and am surprised at the recognition. I am now on the Lord my Master's work; and with the object of serving him and, as I hope, doing some good to my fellow-creatures, by directing them to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, I am out thus late to-night on my way to — town. Come along with me now, and let me talk with you."

The man stuck close to my side, and we went on together some little distance, whilst I made inquiries of him respecting his lying in wait in the hedge at that hour of the night and in such weather. But to all he kept mute; he neither answered my questions nor made any response to the remarks which I felt it a duty to press on his attention. He was evidently ill-disposed, and had lain in secesy with some evil design. I doubt if any honest man would have been where he was and acted as he did; or else, certainly, if I had mistaken his purposes, he would have immediately told me so and set me right, and not have continued silent to my words, particularly when seeking to ascertain the object he had in lying behind the hedge. After proceeding a short distance, he suddenly grasped my hand, then darted forward, sprang into a narrow lane on the left, and I entirely lost him.

How I felt at that moment, so suddenly left again to my own reflections, I cannot describe; but my first impressions were those of Jacob when awaking from sleep on his journey between Beer-sheba and Haran: "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not."

Oh, how often we need some special circumstance to be to our mind the remembrancer of our absolute dependence upon God! The presence of God is always surrounding our path, and we cannot go from his presence nor flee from his Spirit. But we do not always, perhaps, so recognise that presence as when the Lord, by

his interposing providence in the season of a threatening calamity, shows us he is still caring for us, remembering us, and is everywhere with us. We need occasionally some unusual and peculiar circumstance or trial to prove to us that the Lord is "a God nigh at hand, and not afar off." And then, like the patriarch, we attest our surprise that God was still so near, when perhaps we thought ourselves "all alone;" that in this or that crooked troubled path, so intricate to our minds, so trying to our spirits, so dark to our comprehension, he was there too, in his aiding, supporting, protecting, saving providence, love, and grace. "I knew it not." Oh, what joy to our souls to make the discovery, by whatever means it may be, that God is very nigh unto us! But we ought always to believe so if we are his people and servants; for "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."

Rescued so remarkably from the danger in which I had been placed, my heart was lifted up in gratitude to the Almighty for his merciful and timely providence. I blessed him for his protecting hand, and also that he had enabled me at the moment *not* to endeavour to make my escape from the man, which attempt, perhaps, would have altogether failed; but to speak, and to speak in the natural tones of my voice, by which I was instantly recognised, and which prevented the violence that probably would otherwise have been done to me.

It was near midnight when I arrived at my friend's house, to whom I narrated the occurrence; and then we joined together in offering to the Lord the praise due to his great goodness.

In the week following, inquiries were set on foot in the neighbourhood, to trace if possible the individual, but nothing could be discovered; and to the present he remains unknown, as probably will continue to be the case until that day when all secrets shall be made public, and the hidden works of darkness, with all that is treasured up in the Divine remembrance, shall be brought to light.

I can only hope that the few words I addressed to the man may have been blessed by the Holy Spirit to his eternal good. Then, in more senses than one, we shall be constrained to give glory to God, and say, "This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

AN ADVENTURE IN CHINA.

IN August, 1822, when opium smuggling into China by English ships was in its infancy, three of these vessels were at anchor in the pretty little land-locked bay called Cumsen Moon, about twelve miles to the north-east of Macao. The inhabitants about that part of the country had, up to this time, scarcely ever been visited by foreigners; and although it turned out that they were filled with the usual Chinese ill feeling towards them, yet the report from the ship which had been longest there was so favourable, as to cause all arms to be dispensed with by the crews on going on shore at any time, until the following occurrence took place.

Soon after breakfast one fine clear day, Mr. A——, a young officer belonging to the "Swinger," was sent on shore to fill water in the launch, with a crew of eight Lascars and one Englishman. It so happened that he met another officer from the "Nymph" on shore, who was on the same duty as himself. The two youngsters proceeded to take a walk into the country, for the purpose of amusement and information. In doing so, however, they had to leave the boats and ships entirely out of sight, turning sharp round a bluff point very near to the watering-place; which will be seen in the sequel to have been a gross want of prudence, giving the hidden enemy all the advantage which they seem to have been stealthily watching for.

The walk was pursued for about a mile inland, towards a hill;

and then, on returning by the same path, about five hundred yards from the boat, but hidden by the bluff, they were met by thirty or forty Chinamen, some with hoes, and some with heavy sticks, used for carrying weighty things across their shoulders. The Chinamen, after passing, and having a great deal to say amongst themselves, came after the officers, pulled them by the sleeve once or twice to stop them, and stood in the way also to prevent progress. Mr. A——, seeing that they were bent on a disturbance, thought, under the circumstances, that discretion would be the best mode of tactics. He stopped and turned round, but in a moment was knocked down by a blow from some of the crowd of Chinamen. This was followed up by tying the unfortunate officer's hands and feet, stealing his neckerchief (nearly strangling him in the act), and one shoe from his foot, and then letting him lie on the ground.

Mr. B——, seeing this state of things, and possessing good long legs, considered that now was the time to use them, by running through the mob to the boats for assistance, which he fortunately effected. The two crews of Lascars and the one English sailor now took oars and stretchers from the boats, and bravely fought the Chinamen for a short time, till they were driven back to their boats by overpowering numbers, and shoved off, without further loss, to their respective ships, to tell the tale of Mr. A—— being in the hands of the enemy.

The captain of the "Swinger" (an old lieutenant, R.N.) immediately boarded the "Nymph" and "Sea Gull," and advised a razzia of the country till Mr. A—— should be found and brought back, dead or alive, which was forthwith put in execution, by mustering on shore in due time all the officers, petty officers, Lascars, and sepoy who could be spared from the three ships, well armed with muskets, fowling-pieces, swords, pistols, etc., of which opium ships in those days had no niggardly supply.

But we must now return to Mr. A——. The moment the

Chinamen saw the boats shove off from the shore, the order was given to put Mr. A—— on his legs, by untying them; and he, having picked up his hat, but still minus the shoe and neckerchief stood for a moment, till the words, "Fye, fye," were given by one of four villanous-looking fellows who were now left in sole charge of the prisoner. Not knowing the meaning of this, however, at the time—namely, "run, run"—he still stood, and was forthwith saluted by a stroke from a bamboo across the back of the legs near the heels, and dragged forward at the same instant by two of the four men, the other two following in the rear with bamboos, in case any slackening of the pace should appear.

In this manner, at a hard trot, did these wretches drive Mr. A—— through paddy fields, and all sorts of ground, till they reached the top of a hill, about two hundred feet high, although he was in great pain from the blow which he had received, and hardly able to move at all. Before ascending the hill on the other side, Mr. A—— turned round to look at the ships in the distance with feelings of a somewhat melancholy nature, as may be supposed, when the same man who had struck him said, in half Portuguese, half Chinese, "Do you want to look? look! it is your last look!" These words Mr. A—— happened to understand, from having heard occasionally a little of this jargon at Macao, and they certainly did not tend to soothe his mind in its then anxious state. Still, he had a kind of hope that *dollars* might gain his release, although up to this time appearances were far from favouring such an idea. Having descended the hill towards the beach, on the opposite side from the ships, and after a two miles' run with the heat at 100° at least, they halted under some trees close to a small stream of water, of which Mr. A—— asked to be allowed to drink, which was granted. He then, seeing that his wrists were already considerably swollen, from the tightness of the rope by which they were bound, asked to have it slackened. This was also

not only granted, but he was then only tied by one hand; and in a few minutes the run was again commenced for a further distance of about two miles, nearly the whole of which was through heavy sand, till at last a village was entered, and Mr. A—— was safely housed in a large ground-floor room on one side of a square court, where were two long tables, and benches on either side of them.

Tired and fagged with a four-mile march at the double, and dragged along by the rope like a bullock to be slaughtered, he sat down at one of the tables with feelings more easily imagined than described. These were certainly not much relieved when, in a few minutes, the demon of the bamboo brought some huge knives from a corner of the room, and put them to his neck with a grin of delight, saying that the mandarin would soon be there to pass sentence of death on him, when he should cut off his head in the manner then shown.

Meanwhile, hundreds of people came to see the Fankwei—men, women, and children—who had never beheld one in their lives before; some wondered at his dress, others at his hair, and nearly all jeered and laughed at his position; even the women, whose compassion Mr. A—— had tried to gain, abused him and talked of the mandarin, making signs also of cutting off a head, etc.

The crowd being by this time very great, and adding much to the almost insufferable heat, Mr. A—— begged to be relieved from such unwelcome visitors if possible, which request was immediately acceded to, by his being placed in a small room on the other side of the court, where was the usual Chinese bed—namely, a mat and glazed pillow on a board, and a stool and table with a teapot and cup on it. The door of this place was only a mat hung from the top, which was occasionally lifted up, to allow the favoured few to have a peep at the Fankwei, or foreign devil.

Mr. A—— here threw himself down on the mat bed, to await,

as he hoped, the coming of the captain to his rescue, which he knew from experience he would do immediately on learning the circumstances of the case from the boat's crew (for he did not then know of the escape of Mr. B——), and he prayed sincerely that this might happen before the arrival of the said mandarin. The natives offered him tea, which he gladly accepted, after he had first seen them drink out of the same pot; and in a short time, amongst the "favoured few" who were allowed to peep into this raree-show, appeared a man who accosted Mr. A—— with the well-known sounds of "Hey, yah, how you do? I have see you before; I thinkee at Macao." Never was mongrel English more welcome. Mr. A—— recollected having seen the man somewhere, and at once looked upon him as a friend, and asked if he thought there was any danger of his being killed, as had been threatened; to which the man said, in a careless, unsatisfactory sort of way, "No, I no thinkee so."

"Do they want dollars?" asked Mr. A——.

"Yes," was the reply.

"How much?"

"Two thousand," said the man.

"Maskee" (never mind), answered the prisoner. "If you will give me a pen and ink, with a sheet of paper, and take a letter to the captain when written, he will give you the dollars." To this an assent was at once given, and the necessary articles being produced, a letter was forthwith written by Mr. A——, descriptive of the state of the case and his whereabouts, as near as he could guess, not forgetting the bearing of the village from the ship by compass, and requesting that the number of dollars should be paid which were demanded, and no killing or wounding at the watering place; as Mr. A—— was so completely in the Chinamen's hands that he would then be sure to be beheaded. He also asked for a pair of shoes to be sent, to enable him to walk back to the ship.

When this letter was despatched, Mr. A—— lay down once more on the mat, and was now in a comparatively composed state of mind, being under the impression that he would be a prisoner for four or five days at least, as the captain would require to get the ship under weigh and proceed to Macao for such an amount as two thousand dollars, if that sum should really be demanded by the messenger. Far different was the result, however.

On the man's arrival at the watering place, he found a considerable number of well-armed men and officers, all ready for an attack, and vowing vengeance against all Chinamen. The letter was delivered to the captain, and when read, the man was asked how many dollars were demanded, Mr. A—— having in the letter stated no particular number, but merely "to pay" the amount "demanded." His answer was fifty, which the captain immediately went on board the ship and procured, taking the opportunity of getting a pair of shoes to send, and writing a letter to Mr. A—— at the same time; all of which he delivered into the hands of the messenger, the dollars sealed up in a bag, addressed to Mr. A——.

As this man objected to any Englishman going to the village along with him, from fear of a fight, it was thought advisable to give in to him, and send a Chinese carpenter, who belonged to one of the ships, to assist in the negotiation, and show the road back to Mr. A——, no difficulty being apprehended, as the whole sum asked for had been given, and the captain having no knowledge of any greater having been spoken of. He told the man, however, that, having satisfied his demands, he would allow a reasonable time for the release of Mr. A——; but if this was not then accomplished, he would burn the village, and "make a second Lintin business of it, and take him by force:" alluding to what had been done there a few months before by H.M. frigate "Topaz," which caused a stoppage of trade for six weeks at Canton.

With this warning, the two Chinamen left the little "army" at

the watering place, and in due time made their appearance at the village, and delivered the bag of dollars, letter, and shoes to Mr. A——, who, on recognising the carpenter, immediately gave him the dollars to hand over to the four "braves," and expected to be allowed to decamp forthwith. But, "man, man!" (stop!) was the order, and a long angry conversation took place in the large room amongst many Chinamen, who were not a little annoyed at the small sum received by their messenger; but *they* had not seen the "guns and swords, ald rungs and gads" which caused this craven to reduce his figures so instantaneously; and it took at least twenty minutes of verbal war for him to convince his friends that it was better to pocket fifty dollars with a whole skin, than lose their village and their lives by standing out for a larger sum. The carpenter, no doubt, had some weight in the argument, and at last Mr. A—— was "granted a pass" to the watering-place, in company with the carpenter. He tried hard to induce the four braves to accompany him back, by way of showing the road, having a distant glimmering of seeing them tied up at the gangway of his ship, and expiating their offences under the boatswain's tuition; but as the probability of such a climax had no doubt been hinted to their own minds, the invitation was politely refused, saving so far as to the skirts of the village.

With a light heart, Mr. A—— now travelled along with the carpenter, and in the course of an hour had the gratification of being welcomed at the watering-place by three cheers from the armed party in waiting, and many a hearty shake of congratulation by the hand; feeling at the same time deeply thankful to the Almighty for his merciful escape, and particularly for having so willed it that he should have been without arms on the occasion of his capture; as they certainly would have been used, and, as a consequence, would almost as certainly have been the cause of his murder.

As it is customary in China for all mandarins to live upon those

under them, by "squeezing," or making them pay dollars, it was not much to be wondered at that some of them should try to make capital out of the above occurrence; and consequently, three or four days afterwards a man-of-war junk, sent by the admiral from Cheun-pee, came to anchor in the bay, and in a short time the mandarin went on board the "Swinger," and made inquiries touching the description of the attacking parties, and particularly that of the four "braves," which was easily given by Mr. A——, their features being indelibly imprinted on his mind, and he having in addition been able to get hold of their names from some of the natives at the watering place.

The mandarin said he should go on shore and seize those men, and, if successful, bring them on board the "Swinger" the following day for Mr. A—— to identify, when he should tie them up and flog them till Mr. A—— was satisfied. But on that same evening an East India Company's ship arrived and anchored at Lintin, and the captain of the "Swinger" having business to transact with it, it was necessary for him to get under weigh at daylight on the following morning, and sail for that island, distant about six or seven miles, which prevented Mr. A—— witnessing the flogging of the four "braves;" for it was shortly afterwards known that the mandarin did seize them, and not only flogged them well, but "squeezed" them well also.

The ship which had arrived was that to which Mr. A—— properly belonged, he having only been lent to do duty in the "Swinger" during her temporary absence at Penang; and as he then for ever quitted the opium service, he has had no subsequent opportunity of learning any further particulars concerning the men who committed this outrage, or even the name of the village to which he was dragged. The facts are, however, strictly true, and will tend to show how absolutely necessary it is for all boats' crews to use the greatest caution on landing on the coasts of China.

LOST IN THE WOODS.

BEFORE the discovery of gold at Vancouver's Island, when the only European residents were confined within the quadrangle of a wooden fort, or, more properly speaking, a stockade, I was on one occasion very nearly perishing in the woods of that beautiful island. The abundance of game of all sorts, and my own love of adventure, tempted me to set out alone, thereby hoping to have a better chance of securing a deer than if accompanied by a comrade. I started for a small stream running into Esquimalt harbour, where the Indians had informed me the animals came at day-break to drink. I soon found myself following a trail, which I believed led to the desired spot: of this, however, I gradually became doubtful, as the ground began to rise, and the trail grew less distinct as I advanced. The grand trunks of pine trees, towering far above the rest of the forest, and the thick dark foliage they supported, impressed my mind with that indescribable feeling of awe which we experience in the broad silent desert or the perfect calm at sea. I had seen no traces of deer, and the only sounds which had met my ear were the sharp tapping of the large woodpecker and the flapping wings of the pigeons. The stems of the trees were blackened by the action of fire, and in many places some giant trunk, felled by the wintry gales, lay across my path. I toiled onward, but without finding the stream for which I was in search. The sun was high in the heavens, and all chance of reaching the drinking place of the deer in time to meet them was at an end.

After taking a biscuit from my pocket and a sip from my flask, I turned to retrace my steps; but in this I was even less successful, for the trail I had followed appeared to be growing less distinct, and branched off in several directions. Hearing a rustling sound

in the underwood, I stood quite still ; and presently, to my delight, I detected the head of a deer, about two hundred paces in front of me. I raised my gun and fired, when the animal gave a bound, and, as I fancied, fell.

Without thinking of the trail, I ran forward until I reached the exact spot at which the creature was when I pulled the trigger, but he was nowhere to be seen ; upon the leaves, however, there were traces of blood, which I followed, hoping soon to come up with the wounded buck. The difficulty of tracing the blood upon the ground became greater, and at length I was compelled to stop and again try to find my way back. After many fruitless attempts, I was forced to give up, and sit quietly down to think as to my wisest course. The usual expedients by which the Indians regain the lost trail were at that time unknown to me, and having no compass, or any knowledge of the trend of the coast line, I was uncertain in which direction to proceed. I had no watch, and was therefore compelled to guess the hour, by which means alone I could determine my position by the sun, as it was impossible to obtain a sight of the sun's disc. My scanty stock of biscuit was exhausted, and the difficulty of struggling through the scrub had wearied me, so that I fancied it would be wiser to remain where I was, until I could determine my course by the sunset : then I knew that by travelling westward, I must reach the coast. A wolf came near me while seated upon a fallen tree, but I failed to obtain a shot at him, and soon heard his unpleasant howl far away in the forest.

As soon as the twilight commenced, I began to think the night would prove the most uncomfortable part of my adventure ; so, to relieve the gloom, I kindled a fire and collected a'l the dry wood I could lay my hand on, previously choosing a bare spot of open ground, where there could be no fear of the forest taking fire. Sleep was out of the question, for as soon as darkness set in, I

could hear the various predacious animals busy in the distance, and occasionally the light would fall upon the shining eyeballs of a wolf or bear, several of whom were bold enough to approach so near that I could see their forms distinctly. One gaunt old wolf drew so close to me that I could see the glistening of his ugly fangs, and perceive that his skin hung loosely upon his bones. Several times this brute endeavoured to summon courage to face the flames, but a burning piece of wood thrown at him sent him howling back into the gloom. Nothing daunted, he returned to the attack whenever the flames died away, until I put an end to his intrusion by sending a ball through his chest.

At the report of my gun, the whole of the forest seemed alive; birds, bats, and animals of every description, added their sounds to the unearthly screaming of the stricken wolf. Although I had collected a large stock of wood before nightfall, yet keeping three fires burning, between which I placed myself, soon diminished my supply, and made me impatiently long for the morning; added to this, I now began to suffer from great thirst, not having been able to find any water from the time of my leaving for the woods. As the sun gradually threw its beams high into the heavens, the excitement of the nocturnal feeders grew less, and at sunrise I found myself alone once more. After casting a careful glance around on every side, I stepped from my lodging in quest of the wolf I had shot. To my surprise, not a trace of the carcass was to be found. I had no doubt he was killed by my ball, from the quiet way in which he lay for an hour or two afterwards; he must therefore have been carried off by his comrades.

Directly the sun showed, I turned my back to it, and pushed my way through the underwood, having previously reloaded my double-barrelled gun. The further I went, the thicker the tangled shrub became. My thirst was increasing, and my want of rest did not improve my condition. For hours I toiled on, yet never

seemed to find the trace of human beings. Sometimes I went through gigantic ferns, where it was quite impossible to steer my course, as, once amongst them, everything else was hidden, they rising many feet above my head. I could hear the deer push through them. I occasionally fired at a squirrel or a bird, in the hope that the report of my piece might reach a stray Indian, and thus bring me help. Another night at length stared me in the face. I searched for berries, but could find none, and water was nowhere to be seen. The ground and wood were parched and dry. I was so exhausted that it was with difficulty I could make a fire; nothing but the stimulus which the idea of a prowling wolf, or the loud sniffing of the black bear, gave to my fears, induced me to exert myself.

Towards the morning I noticed a thickness in the air, coming up with the wind, and soon perceived the smell of smoke to windward of my fires. At first I hoped it was some party sent to search for me, and therefore discharged one barrel of my gun. What was my horror, however, while listening for an answer to it, when I heard the crackling of sticks and the roar of flames! The forest was on fire. In my fear I rushed madly forward away from the flames, but they were evidently fast overtaking me; and past me on every side galloped deer, wolves, and bears, while birds of various kinds flew before the clouds of pursuing smoke. In the horror of the moment my thirst was forgotten; the two dreadful nights I had passed were obliterated from my memory, and I struggled on, exerting all my remaining strength. As I burst through a dense growth of ferns I observed an Indian lad running, not away from the fire, but across it. I shouted, and the boy beckoned. In a moment it occurred to me that my only chance of safety was to follow the lad. Throwing my gun and powder away, I gave chase, and notwithstanding his fleetness managed to keep him in sight. Every nerve was strained, every sense on the alert, for already I

could feel the heat from the roaring flood of flame. Onward I staggered, the smoke now blinding me, and the oppression being so great that I felt my efforts must soon terminate. Still, I fancied through the distant trees I could see the fire gleam upon the sea. From this time I know no more, for I reeled forward and fell to the ground.

When I recovered myself, I was lying upon the sea shore, close to the water, with several Indians squatting by my side. As I recovered, I became aware of my hair having been burnt, and my clothes very much scorched. It appears that the Indian boy told two of his tribe that I was following him, whereupon they had entered the forest in time to see me fall, and had at great peril dragged me after them to a place of safety. These men proved to be Indians of a friendly tribe, who had been despatched in search of me, upon the promise of some twenty blankets if they brought me in alive. They started the morning after I failed to return, and had followed my trail as far as the first night-fires, but could not proceed, the underwood having caught light from them; and so they were obliged to take to the coast, where they providentially met with the boy, who stated my being close at hand; and thus my life was saved when lost in the Vancouver Island woods.

ADVENTURE WITH SPANISH SMUGGLERS.

AT the close of the year 1850, I embarked from Jaffa on board an English schooner, of small tonnage and still smaller accommodations, that had been loading Syrian wheat for the markets of either Cork or Plymouth, whichever port the fickle winds might happen to waft us to. A long sojourn in the east, and a frequent acquaintance with fever in its most pernicious form, had induced my

medical advisers to recommend a sea voyage; and a love of home, added to a much-cherished desire to be an eyewitness of the wonders of the then widely spoken of Exhibition, pointed out England as the most desirable spot for renovating a nearly broken constitution, and for mingling once more with the delights of civilized towns and sensible companions. Accordingly, with a sallow face and a bottle of sulphate of quinine—the inseparable companion of my travels—I took leave of the Holy Land, and lent a hand in getting up the anchor and sheeting the sails home.

The schooner being fairly under weigh and making good progress through the waters, I descended into the small and badly lit cabin, which was to be my home for many days to come, there to draw an inference from the features and conversation of my companions, as to the probability of my having a pleasant or a disagreeable voyage. The close, damp, confined smell of that gloomy cabin—too low to stand upright in—too slippery and greasy to sit with comfort in—too dark to see to read in—too full of lockers filled with miscellaneous stores to hope for rest or quiet in—all these things foreboded sad inconvenience and perpetual trouble; and such forebodings were amply verified. The accommodation for passengers consisted of two berths of about five feet long, and one and a half broad; in some parts two feet, in others only a foot, high. Here mattresses, etc., were spread at night; but in the morning they were rolled up, to admit of free access to the bread lockers. The space between these two berths was the sitting apartment, with a small table rivetted to the centre, and a small hatch under it, through which the cabin boy was perpetually disappearing in search of cabin stores. Round the table in a semi-circle ran some lockers, which served as seats, greasy with old age and continual pawing. Off the cabin was the captain's state room, which had much the appearance of a dirty bandbox, full of indescribable odds and ends. How he ever found anything he put

away, or ever found room to put anything away at all, was always a puzzle to me. A small glass skylight admitted the light in fine weather, and the sea to a very inconvenient extent when it was rough. The schooner was called a clipper, which term signifies, I imagine from the experience I gleaned, a vessel that has never a dry spot on her decks, from stem to stern, be she before or on a wind.

Well, so far so bad; but this is not one hundredth part of what we had to undergo. The berth opposite to the one allotted to me was occupied by a shipwrecked captain, who had lost his vessel in a gale at Jaffa. His mate and an apprentice were also passengers; but, as there was no room for them aft, they slept with the sailors, and only came down into the cabin at meal hours. This ogre of a man, as I may fairly term him, who had, as he himself declared, been the unluckiest of mortals from his youth up, was always prognosticating something unpleasant to us all. When the wind was fair, he argued that it would not last; when foul, that it had set in for a fortnight. A squall with him was the forerunner of a gale; a gale was to increase to a hurricane; while on a really stormy night, the smallest evil he predicted was the shifting of the cargo, and the sudden disappearance of vessel and all beneath the waves. Our own captain was a timid but very consequential little man, and one that paid great deference to the suggestions and ominous bodings of his passenger.

Besides all this, we had in good earnest very dismal weather the whole voyage home, and this was nothing but what was to be expected in the depth of winter. The mate and the men were perpetually wet; the cabin boy, who was also cook, led a life in comparison to which that of a slave must be quite enviable. The fire in the galley was always being put out by the sea; the mate growled for his coffee, the captain for a dry shift of clothes, and the unhappy boy had to bear the brunt of all. He was punched by

the men, cuffed by the mate, roared at by the captain, and never slept, I should think, for whole weeks together, for more than twenty minutes on a stretch. I need not here refer at length to the miseries I suffered in being cooped up with such unseemly beings; the disgusting meals, the loathsome table cloth, the incessant alarms, both false and well founded; wet men, with dark lanterns, rushing into the cabin at all hours of the night, to see how the time went, or in search of a block, or a marline spike, or a pump tack, or some requisite for the frequently occurring casualties. Suffice it to say, that we had a rich variety of mishaps, and all the ogre's predictions were verified, except the total loss of the vessel and its hands. We sprang a leak; the cargo shifted slightly; the sails were torn all to tatters; there was hardly a sound rope left in the rigging; the mainmast had sprung; the skylight was washed away; a poor fellow had fallen overboard in a calm, and was drowned; and, as we neared the Straits of Gibraltar, nightly adventures took place with outward-bound vessels, each one of which seemed bent upon our utter destruction, coming so close upon us in the dark of the night as to cause the greatest confusion and dismay.

Thus had we been knocked about and tossed on the ocean for upwards of a month, when at last the winds grew more propitious, and twenty-four hours' fair weather brought us in safety into the bay of Gibraltar—a kind of half-way house to all ships on their voyage from the Mediterranean. We had no sooner passed the rock than the wind chopped round again and blew a perfect hurricane in our teeth. Now was a favourable opportunity to recruit the exhausted strength of the crew by repose and wholesome provisions; but the master was too much afraid of his griping owner at home, who regularly taxed his meagre bills each voyage, to dare to incur the expenses attendant on the anchorage—such as harbour and other dues, etc. We had, consequently, the mortification to

see whole fleets of homeward-bound vessels lying snugly at anchor off the forts, patiently abiding a shift of wind which might render the navigation of the Gut practicable, whilst we ourselves were cruising about day and night in fruitless attempts to stem the tide, which sets in from Tariffa like a sluice.

One night, after we had been about a fortnight at this kind of work, beating tack and tack up the narrow passage, the wind failing us entirely, it was found requisite to let go a bower anchor, so as to keep the vessel from drifting. Scarcely had the cable been veered out, before we were boarded by one of those desperate Spanish smugglers, who, in spite of the fate sure to attend their detection, make it a frequent practice to visit homeward-bound vessels becalmed in the Gut, to supply them with fresh meat, fruit, vegetables, bread, etc., all which they sell at an exorbitant price; as well they may, considering the risk incurred. Now my readers must remember that all vessels from Turkey and Egypt are furnished with unclean bills of health, and hence all communication with them is strictly forbidden, both by the British government at Gibraltar, and by the Spanish government. Though steamers are continually passing and repassing, and Spanish gunboats cruising about on the look-out, these hardy bravoos set all laws at defiance, and manage, in spite of all consequences, to hold incessant intercourse with homeward-bound British vessels, from which, as may be readily conceived, they derive no small emolument. To be fired upon was an every-day occurrence with them; and one sinister-looking fellow, the chief of the gang that boarded us, had no less than fourteen bullet wounds in his body, all which he showed us with the greatest exultation. The captain, who had no scruples in breaking the quarantine regulations, gave the smugglers to understand that, if we were detained next day by contrary winds, they were at liberty to bring off a certain quantity of beef, fruit, vegetables, etc., the whole of which was to cost about

twenty dollars, or five pounds sterling. They perfectly understood the order, although given in broken Italian, and cheerfully promised to be punctual in the fulfilment of the captain's wishes. Intelligence of the expected good cheer soon got wind amongst the crew, and, tired as they were of sea diet, they impatiently awaited the return of the boat. Where a captain sets the example of breaking the law, his crew are not likely to be very particular on the subject. The captain himself, however, as subsequently appeared, having the dread of his owner before him, inwardly hoped that a breeze might spring up and carry off the vessel before the return of the smugglers should compel him to disgorge the twenty dollars. The smugglers, however, did return; their boat was laden, too, with many such things as a half-starved sailor yearns for.

Meanwhile, a fair wind sprang up, and all hands were busily employed weighing the anchor, just as the smugglers' boat reached the vessel's side. The Spaniards made frantic gesticulations to our captain to heave to; but nothing would induce him to do this. Finding this to be the case, they made fast the painter of their boat to the mainchains, and, springing upon deck, vociferated loudly for payment; and the captain, pretending not to understand what they said, referred them to me, as a person who understood the tongue. Accordingly, on me they fastened, like angry wolves upon their prey. My arguments to prove my innocence in the transaction were useless. One ruffian was handling his dagger in a most unpleasant manner; and, little doubting but that he would make good use of it if I held out, I was obliged to make a precipitate retreat to the cabin. I had hardly reached it, and secured the cabin door after me, when I heard a violent scuffle ensue on deck. The mate and men, who had been too much occupied at first to observe what was going forward, rushed aft, on seeing one of the Spaniards dive down the cabin ladder after me. In his rage

to gratify his revenge, the chief smuggler placed ten dollars in the captain's hands to obtain his permission to fire a single shot at me through the skylight. I need not say that such a proposition was replied to by the immediate forcible expulsion of the Spaniards, who were bundled unceremoniously into their boat. The vessel speedily distanced them; but just as I reached the deck again, the loud report of a pistol, aimed at me, rang in my ears, and the splinters from the companion hatch, which the ball had struck, flew high up in the air. So nearly was I becoming a victim to the mean trickery of the worthless captain, and to the insatiable revenge of the Spaniards!

The whole adventure was calculated to leave the impression strongly on my mind that, if we venture to do what is improper, as the captain manifestly had done in breaking through the harbour regulations, and encouraging these reckless men, we can never be sure of the consequences. The smallest deviation from what is right may entail the most serious and painful results upon those who yield to it.

A LADY'S ADVENTURE DURING AN INUNDATION OF THE RHONE.

WE had disembarked at the great port of Marseilles, the landing place from the French province of Algeria. My companions took their places at once for Avignon; but I wanted to see the old town of Arles, a place deservedly interesting, not only for its ancient Roman memorials, but its dearer Christian memories; I therefore only took mine as for that city, having arranged to join my friends in a few days at their hotel in Avignon.

The season was late in autumn, and, were we speaking of India, it might be briefly described as the rainy season; for such rain,

following a summer of extreme heat, has seldom been seen. Even on shipboard we had murmured at that disagreeable tautology, rain on sea. Notwithstanding the pertinacity of the skies, however, I descended at Arles. I wanted to see its Coliseum, where gladiators had fought, and martyrs of Jesus had died. I wanted to see, also, the great old cemetery of the Romans, where some of those conquerors of ancient Gaul had been laid in dust.

I saw the Coliseum, built by the proud Romans, and saw now, under its grand old walls, the otherwise houseless poor of modern days had erected their miserable sheds with almost Irish ingenuity. I saw the modern women of Arles, reminding one of the matrons of ancient Rome. I thought of Cæsar and of Gaul; I thought of a greater than Cæsar, and of his greater yet lowlier followers. And so, having thought of Christian times and Roman times, in this old city of Gaul, I set off in search of the cemetery of its mighty conquerors.

The rain fell, sometimes heavy, sometimes light, but always constantly. I had no guide, and relied on finding what I wanted by turning the words "Roman cemetery" into French—a sort of phraseology which much perplexed the kind people who wished to direct me. I saw, however, stone coffins built into rude modern stone walls, as the boundary of fields; and I saw, beside farm-houses, cattle drinking out of stone troughs that once had held the body of a proud Roman. Morsels of antiquity, put to uses vile, were seen all around; but it was with much difficulty I made out my way to the vast field of the dead, for which I looked. A strangely impressive scene it was—one of havoc and desolation. The antiquary, the moralist, the Christian, might there find interesting matter for thought.

Two reasons made my survey a hasty one: first, the grass was long and wet, among which lay the broken stones of the tombs, and I had wet from above and beneath; and secondly, and far more

effectively, my place was taken in the diligence to Avignon; and before railways changed our customs, it is well known that the only unanswerable plea that could be made for resisting the entreaties of friends to stay with them, was to say at once, "I have taken my place." So I had taken mine; and not even Roman antiquities would have induced me to linger, even if my wet feet had not also felt more ready to hasten back to Arles than to linger in that wild field of the long ago dead.

It was in the afternoon that I entered the diligence for Avignon, where I was to rejoin my friends at an appointed hotel. The end of October was approaching, and the torrents of rain that had fallen for some days, had by no means ceased; but I felt quite comfortable when once seated in the first place of the *coupé*.

The rain had increased, and darkness began to gather, when I became sensible that some unusual cause of interest or inquiry had arisen between the rest of the passengers and the conductor, who, at each descent from his elevated seat in the *banquette*, was eagerly questioned by them; while he appeared as eagerly to question all persons whom he encountered on the road. The further we went the more did this sort of commotion increase; heads were projected from the windows of "the interior" and the *rotonde*, and anxious inquiries were evidently made; but I was too secluded in my "first place" to be able to hear the cause of an anxiety, which, indeed, I did not at all share, simply because I thought it could not concern me. I soon began to observe that, at every hamlet we passed, a short halt was made; the diligence was surrounded by seemingly anxious people, and the passengers spoke to them still more anxiously. Our conductor, a fine active young man, had been all along impatient of delay, but he became more and more so; and each successive driver, who was taken up with each fresh set of horses, was either more and more sulky, or more boisterous and daring. There was evidently something the matter; but I

had the *coupé* all to myself, and, not caring to open the window and let the rain in, merely to hear what sounded to me as a rude jabber of foreign tongues, I acted a thoroughly English part, and, drawing myself into my snug corner, listened to the splashing of water around us, and thought it was very well to feel dry when so many must be wet. I saw, nevertheless, that as darkness deepened, my fellow-passengers dropped rapidly away; luggage, intended to have seen Avignon, was hastily made to descend, amid the entreaties of passengers, the vociferations of helpers and lookers-on, and the indignant exclamations of the excited conductor, who evidently felt each moment of lost time to be more and more harassing. At last he would no longer be delayed by stopping to take down the luggage; he let out his passengers, only crying to them that they would find their goods at a future time in Avignon, and, scarcely waiting till their feet touched the ground, shouted out, *Allez!* and on we dashed. The last we thus let down was a Frenchwoman, who had long seemed resolved to share whatever fate might lie before her boxes, which of course contained the robe that few Frenchwomen, under any circumstances, can forget; but she, too, finally descended at a poor house by the way-side, saying something of the necessity of trying to save herself, but affirming, in touching though vehement tones, that her trunks were doomed to perish, and without resource. The conductor flinging out his hands in answer, was springing up to his seat in the *banquette*, muttering that he then must perish with them, when a sudden thought must have struck him that something was still in the *coupé*. He opened the door, looked in, and said with emphasis—

“Will *you* keep your place?”

“Without doubt: I am going to Avignon.”

“Brave woman? *allons!*—*vive les Anglaises!*” he cried, clapped the door, and on we drove.

I knew I got praise, and I liked it, especially from a Frenchman; but how I came to deserve it I knew not.

The darkness grew intense: deep silence succeeded the recent commotion; the conductor only spoke at intervals to the driver, and then it was in that deep-toned voice which always indicates anxiety. I felt, rather than heard, that he exhorted him to speed; the driver's voice, in reply, seemed buried in his throat. The sound of water was on every side. Surely, I began to think, it is not merely rain.

Our road lay along the course of the Rhone—"the arrowy Rhone," so swift and strong; but, though I knew that, the idea of danger from it had never crossed my mind; even still I imputed the urgent haste, the anxious voices, or still more anxious silence of the men, to the fact that the heavy rains had made them wet and out of temper. In critical moments, or circumstances of much anxiety, speech is always repressed; the loud and eager voices of the two men were hushed, and not a human or living thing appeared to be on the road. A low remark, or a brief exhortation to speed, was all that was heard from the active conductor; while our last driver soon ceased to utter the cries, expostulations, and abusive epithets which a French postilion employs in aid of the terrible whip, by whose sound only the horses are driven.

Thus, in silence and darkness, I rested content, till a sudden dash of water over the windows of the diligence convinced me that rain was not the cause of fear. I rose to the front windows and looked out. To my astonishment, all that was visible of the six white horses, harnessed three and three abreast, was just the top of their broad flat backs rising above the water; even their short tails, wound up in straw, were submersed.

"We are in *a* river," said I to myself; "not in *the* river, undoubtedly. But what can be done? The conductor will not drown himself or me, if he can help it."

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I drew back to my corner, supposing that we were crossing some part of a river, but never imagining that the river was crossing us. The men kept unbroken silence; nothing save the splashing and dashing of water was heard: it went over the top of the diligence, and streamed down again over my windows, so that I could not see the least bit through them. I felt the men were not asleep, and I began to feel that they were deeply anxious; I tried if it were possible to open the window and ask what was the matter, but I soon saw it was wiser to let the water stay outside than to admit it in. I rested in the same silence till a slight ascent in our road became perceptible: as soon as this was the case, the voice of the conductor burst out; he called, he cried, he implored, scolded, promised, urged the apparently sulky driver; he impelled the horses himself; he seemed ready to jump down and help them to draw; the driver, too, awoke; his terribly resounding whip went like a succession of pistol shots; his voice helped it, loading the poor terrified animals with all sorts of tenderly abusive epithets; calling them hogs, robbers, little rascals, demons, cowards, interspersed with encouragements and formidable threats. The conductor was standing up, leaning over and looking round. On we went up-hill, evidently rising out of water, and driving as for life or death. When, all at once—plash!—down we went, or else up came the water, I know not which; I thought we had plunged into the river at last. It was a startling moment, and I uttered a little scream, though no one heard it. The horses were plunging; even their white backs no longer appeared like a line of light when I tried to see; and I heard an exclamation from the conductor, that went to say something that sounded certainly very like a declaration that we were lost. It was almost time to get afraid, and I had just formed the determination to be so, and to remain quiet no longer, when a shout burst over my head—a cry not of terror but joy; it was echoed by the driver; the foam of water was

lashing over us, but we were ascending. With great difficulty I got the window partly opened, and called up to the *banquette*. "What is the matter, conductor?" "We are saved! we are saved! Be quiet now; shut the window," he said; and I saw the lights of Avignon dimly gleaming through the mist. We were closer to it than even he had known. The whip cracked, the horses flew up the rising ground, the water lashing over them: at full gallop we dashed through the old gate of the city; no revenue officers or customary formalities stopped us; but straight on we drove into a large coach-house or covered shed of some sort.

Here our conductor was instantly surrounded by eager inquirers; anxious faces circled us in a crowd. Breaking through all, he ran to the *coupé*, took me out like a bundle of goods, and put me down, above my knees in water; then, finding I could not, or would not, wade on in it, he snatched me up in his arms like a child, ran across a street, kicked open the door of a house, and dropped me into the passage within it.

A woman, with a white face and long thin candle in an equally long thin candlestick in her hand, came to it, and would evidently have kept it closed if she could. By the light of that candle I saw what the good conductor's exertions or anxieties must have been; he was a strong, active, ruddy-complexioned young man; but now he was singularly pale, and large drops of what seemed to be cold perspiration were falling from his forehead. His chest heaved, as if from long pent-up breath. He said a hasty word to the staring woman—I only heard him utter "brave woman" as he pushed me in, and, before she could recover sufficiently from her surprise to speak, he had disappeared.

I saw her look after him quite aghast, and, turning my head to the street, beheld a crowd of persons flocking to her open door like mosquitoes attracted by the candle. Her face, one might think, was enough to drive them back; but, in addition, all her energy

was required to get the door closed: she then moved the candle for me to follow her, and went up-stairs, ushering me into a dirty, most repulsive, and very cold chamber.

"Do you not think I had better go to another house?" I said.

"On the contrary, I think you had better stay where you are. You ask me what I think; I tell you what I *think*, but not what I *wish*," she replied; and, lighting a much shorter bit of candle, left it with me and went away.

I was wet from head to foot; cold, and in want of a warm drink, and something to eat: fire, too, was an absolute necessity. I went out on the staircase, and saw her walking about below it, as if attempting to barricade her house. I called down, and requested a fire. The candle waved a negation; but, in addition to its expressiveness, she added, "Fire! No!" and went on.

I watched, shivering, till she repassed.

"Can I have supper?"

"Supper! Are you mad?" and with a doubly negative wave, came back with a chilling emphasis, "No! no! a thousand times no!"

I crept back to my cold, black-looking chamber. The rain had for some time ceased to fall, and, never having conceived a notion of an inundation, I was totally at a loss to account for all these very unusual symptoms. At last the idea of a revolution occurred to me. "Yes," I said to myself, "there is certainly a revolution, and at Avignon, with all its hideous, bloody memories." I shivered. But then I was cold as well as frightened; and the cold I hoped to get rid of, if I could not the fear. I therefore took off my wet clothes and went to bed. But to sleep was impossible. The house was assailed by knocks and loud calls outside. These forced my poor hostess to appear at a window, from whence she pathetically implored the crowd of persons below to consult their own safety,

and begone from a house that was certain to be destroyed. This was an additional solace for me. The tumult in the street kept me awake all night.

CHAPTER II.

AFTER such a night as that described in the previous chapter, one feels less disposed to rise in the morning. But day had only broke, when my hostess burst into my chamber. The candle was not in her hand, but her face looked even worse.

"Mademoiselle, have the goodness to rise instantly."

"Why?"

"You must leave the house this moment."

"Why?"

"Because if you don't go this moment, you will never go at all—no never! You will be lost. We shall all be lost. We have no provisions. We must shut up all below, and take refuge at the top of the house. We cannot maintain you."

"What is the matter?" I cried, jumping up with more alacrity than I had believed myself capable of. "Is it a revolu——"

"What is the matter? Are you ignorant, then?—and you travelled last night? Go to the door, and you will see."

I dressed quickly, and went to the door. The house was a corner one, and the street was rather more elevated than those adjoining it. The day was bright, and all was still. My hostess saw me looking complacently from her door. She caught my hand, and drew me out to the corner of the house, making me look down the next street; and there, to my surprise, I saw an advancing tide, the water flowing on in a full stream, and people in boats saving some of their goods from the houses.

"Are not the waters come?" she cried, in a tone of bitter triumph. "Now, then, save yourself—begone—leave us. We are lost."

"Where are the hotels?" I asked.

"In the waters," was the answer; and it was a true one, for all the good hotels, being near the river, were the soonest submerged. Many English travellers on their way to Italy were made prisoners in them. My friends—where were they? To seek them was impossible.

"What shall I do?" I said, much more humbly than I had yet spoken.

"Do what you can, only leave us. Be quick—go—leave us;" and with a wave, as if of an imaginary candle, she disappeared, and I never saw her again.

As I looked round in a sense of forlornness, I saw a young countryman in a clean bright blue blouse, with a countenance that might be said to carry a good letter of introduction in its frank, honest, kind expression. He was talking with an equally pleasant looking young woman. I went over to him, explained my position, said I was a stranger, as my speech testified; that I had narrowly escaped being in the waters the night before, and now wanted to find a lodging where I could be kept out of them.

The young woman evidently seconded my appeal, and, after a few moments' consultation between themselves, he turned to me, took off his casquette, and asked if I would allow him the honour of conducting me to some houses in the high part of the city, where I might obtain lodgings. I gladly allowed him that honour. I had no luggage, no bag even, to remove; and, having my bonnet in my hand, and my still wet clothes on, I set off with my new friend. My hostess, indeed, had put my bonnet in my hand, and her retreat closed up her house; she sought for no pay, and I believe my nightly refuge was only accorded to me for the conductor's sake.

Guided by the polite Frenchman, I soon ascended above the advancing waters. The streets then were dry, the air quite warm;

but the aspect of the sky was curious ; it was not dark, nor grey, nor what we call lowering, but it seemed so low that, while blue and bright, one might think to take hold of it from the tops of the houses.

We applied in vain at several lodging-houses ; they would not take lodgers now, because provisions might fail ; they had no firing, or made some such excuse. At last my friendly guide managed to get me a large clean chamber, at the very top of a very high house, in the highest part of Avignon, just near the foot of the vast rocky hill on which stands the citadel. Here, leaving me with a tidy old woman, he took an order for my luggage, with which, in implicit faith, I intrusted him, and went off to seek my late conductor, who had all my worldly possessions. I had eaten nothing from my breakfast the day before : certainly a French breakfast is a nice, as well as a substantial meal ; but, after twenty-four hours' fast, the prospect of its repetition was particularly pleasing. My three wants now were—fire, breakfast, and change of raiment. For the last I must bide the time of another ; for the two former I proceeded to ask my new housekeeper. *Brer' st and fire!* The utter astonishment in which my old hostess repeated the words almost alarmed me. What ! Breakfast and fire, when all the world were in the waters ; when they had no provisions, no firing, and never might be able to get any : did I imagine she was to give me breakfast and fire, because she let me her chamber ?

I saw I must moderate my demands, and I took another tone.

Well, just for this time, she could give me a little coffee, and sugar and boiled milk, and bread and butter, and—yes, if there was nothing else—some eggs would do ; I could then make an English breakfast. And she would also give me a fire. She held up her hands, lifted her shoulders, eyed me as if thinking whether I was quite in my right mind, and, for a further exposition of what I was to expect from her, went over to a small closet, opened the

door, and showed me it was very neat, and quite empty ; she said I might keep my wood there : then to another, and exhibited cups and crockery ware in excellent order ; then on to a really charming little scullery, where pots and pans were all beautifully arranged, and where she told me I must wash up all the things I used. I replied, that all the domestic arrangements for housekeeping in a single chamber were truly admirable and perfect ; but my only embarrassment was, that I had nothing to begin my housekeeping with, and I was really desirous to use some of the cups, and plates, and pans, before I washed them.

"Do so, then," she answered with a nod, and was moving off.

"But I have nothing to use them with."

"That is your affair."

I began a pathetic tale ; told how narrowly I had escaped from being lost in the waters of the Rhone ; how I was wet, cold, and hungry ; and how much I felt the necessity of hot *café au lait* to resuscitate me.

"It was truly dreadful," she remarked ; but her eyes spoke of a melting mood—"truly dreadful ; but if people would travel, what else could they expect ? The English travel on the high roads ; they spent their money, and lost their lives as well as their time ; but if they chose to die on the high roads, that was not her affair."

"Ah ! but the French are so kind. I might have been left, at all events, knee-deep in the waters all night, if a good Frenchman had not carried me in his arms into a house."

"Well, yes ; it was necessary to be good to foreigners—that was well understood," the mollified old dame began to mutter.

"Yes ; and then, see now, madame, it was this very reputation of the French that made me so confident that you would give me coffee, and such things, till I can get them for myself."

"Well, if you will, for this once."

"Yes ; and you will make me a fire ?"

"Make a fire! Heard one ever the like?"

"At least you will give me wood?"

"Well, yes, it is necessary to be kind to strangers;—yes, for this once; but you must make your fire."

"Very well, that I will do."

I was delighted to find that politeness and good humour really do succeed with the French. My breakfast soon appeared: while I was enjoying it in came my hostess, dragging a tall bundle of brushwood, followed by a man loaded with great logs. This was all stored in the closet, and the good dame told me I might make my fire, but exhorted me to be saving of the wood, as she could not, on any terms, get me more; all the wood, as well as coffee, milk, eggs, bread, meat, butter, and everything else one wanted, being, with all the world, in the waters.

"Now, then, make your fire," said she, putting a box of matches on the table; "but if you take my counsel, you will not waste the matches, since we can get no more—positively no more."

"Are the matches in the waters also?"

"Undoubtedly. Now you speak to me no more—absolutely no more. I have done my duty. It is necessary to be good to strangers. Now light your fire, and warm some water, and wash up those cups, and mind you never speak one word to me any more."

She went away, dear old thing, satisfied she had done her duty by a stranger; and I set to work to obey her directions. But, alas! after many efforts, I had to call upon her to complete the task.

She began to work in her own way—quite a different one from mine—building up the logs in an artistic manner, on scientific principles, and very soon had made me a charming fire while giving me a lesson how to make it. Somehow I never did learn that lesson practically, and each day it was repeated during the whole fortnight that I was a water-bound prisoner in the good

dame's house; and each day I had my fire lighted while she was teaching me how to do it, and marvelling at my invincible ignorance.

Just as I had settled myself to the enjoyment of its blaze, and was witnessing the process of evaporation taking place from my garments, in walked my honest-looking Frenchman, as honest as his looks, with my travelling bags in his hand, and followed by a youth with my portmanteau on his shoulder. He congratulated me with real friendliness on being so comfortable, assured me I might rest in peace, as there was no danger, for all the old woman said, the waters would reach me in my elevated lodging; and of that he was glad, for the conductor had told him I was a woman of courage, and my life was worth saving, though he had been much afraid it might be lost in the flood the night before. I felt that as men become heroes often by accident, women may appear to be heroines from ignorance.

"But what has caused this flood?" I asked this intelligent young man. "Can the late rains, heavy though they were, so affect the great river Rhone?"

"It is not our river," he replied, "that is to blame; but that very ill-natured one, the Durance. In autumn, when there is much rain, it becomes truly wicked; the snows that melt in the mountains, up there in Dauphiné, swell the torrents that pour into it, and then it meets our river, which is good enough by itself, but when it is charged with these bad neighbours, you see, *mademoiselle*, it grows very mischievous. The poor people down below there will lose all."

"You, I hope, are not in danger of loss," I said, at the same time presenting him with some money as compensation for his trouble.

"Pardon me," he said with a bow, "I am not in the waters, and can take nothing; I am happy to have served you. The boy who carried the trunk will be glad of a trifle."

I thanked him gratefully: he went away bowing and smiling, and saying he had only done as he would wish one of my country people to do by him if he were a stranger in England. I sighed as he closed the door, thinking if it were certain that an English countryman would take all this trouble for a foreigner, without any notion of reward. Then I opened my portmanteau, which was only strapped down, without any lock. All was right, and, more surprising, dry within; and I soon luxuriated in my change of circumstances to such a degree, as, with too common selfishness, to forget for a time that all the world was in the waters.

I got coffee a second time, and an egg for my dinner; I feared to ask for more, for even that was obtained with a great deal of manoeuvring. However, the very next day I reconnoitred from my window the position of the house, and satisfied myself that there could be no obstacle to my mounting the vast hill of rock on which my window looked. Accordingly, notwithstanding the warning of my hostess, I left the house, and soon mounted the heights. The view from thence was curious.

Avignon, the city of the popes, was called in old time, before so many of its churches were destroyed, *La Ville Sonnante*—the ringing town—from the number of its bells; but now even the diminished number of its bells were silent, for the churches were inundated, most of them being full of water to the pulpit tops; and the houses in the lower part of the town were almost buried. The deepest silence prevailed: it was like Venice, if the voices of people and the sounds of music were unheard in that water-city; but the poor people who went about the inundated streets in boats were quite unlike the gondoliers and the grand canal passengers.

As far as one could well see around the town, the mighty Rhone appeared to be the conqueror and possessor of the land that had lately held it in. The tops of the trees on islets were covered; only some of the upper parts of taller trees on its banks

were visible above the flood, and looked like water-marks to show its extent; and the spires and turrets of the old papal city alone towered up haughtily over the waste of waters. All traffic and travelling were suspended, business was at a stand, only a few shops in high situations were open; and the stillness of this large, busy, and reputedly noisy city was almost oppressive. It was useless to ask for any one or anything—the post-office was in the waters; the letters were in the waters; all the world, in the brief sum total of French speech, was in the waters. But my walk yielded me more than a curious view. As I descended the hill, I happened to take a wrong turn, and found myself in a nice and pretty little market. Never was market more grateful to my eyes. The people who had goods to sell there looked very gloomy, and those who came to buy looked very cheerful. The reason, they told me was, that the latter got better bargains than they should get when provisions ought to be so dear; and the former, having come from the country with their provisions, could not sell them because customers could not get to them. Here I got the most delicious lamb and the sweetest autumn violets. The lamb was so delicate, one could not think it what is vulgarly called butchers' meat; neither was it so rich as game. I believe its delicacy arose from the creatures being fed on the Cevennes mount-ains, which are covered with aromatic herbage.

At the end of a fortnight the rain, which for some previous days had been light, but pretty constant, quite ceased; the sun came out of its thin shroud, and a breeze sprang up. My old hostess came to give me her daily lesson in fire-making, and announced that soon all the world would be out of the waters. I went out on the hill, and saw the flood was rapidly retiring; the dry ground was seen, where before the waters had prevailed. The feel of the air was the most remarkable I have ever known: I can only compare it to a warm vapour bath, if you can fancy the sun

shining through a vapour bath. The sky was blue and bright, the air quite still, but both hot and moist—wetting while it warmed you. The aspect all around was most deplorable; worse, now that the flood was retreating, than when it prevailed: misery was apparent now; it had been covered before—ruined dwellings and goods; people knee-deep in mud, trying to gain access to what was so lately their home, or their shop. When I saw the melancholy looks of so many, my heart reproached me with my late pleasant and selfish contentment.

I soon walked down to the town: I saw many persons cleaning mud and water from houses and churches. The pulpit of one of the latter was quite filled with mud. A melancholy looking English carriage—known to be English by having a “lady’s maid” seated outside, whereas a *femme de chambre* would have been with her lady inside—drove languidly out from a hotel: an old lady only was in it, and it moved away with the subdued air of a besieged party allowed to retire.

I found my friends at their hotel, and waded in through soft mud and water, to astonish them with my appearance. My house-keeping had agreed with me, and they did not take me for a spectre, though they had, they declared, been horribly uneasy for my fate. I assured them I had been equally so for theirs, as I was told their hotel was in the waters.

I returned to my single chamber, to take leave of my kind old hostess. I assured her, if she ever came to England, it would give me pleasure to teach her how to light one of our coal fires.

“And that, mademoiselle,” she said, “I think you may well do; for it is my belief you would never have known how to do any one thing if you had not been with me, when all the world was in the waters.”

And so my teaching time ended when the Rhone and Durance withdrew to their proper limits.

I have written in a lively strain, for I have recorded on paper the facts and circumstances of what befell me, simply as they occurred. Yet it would be ungrateful not also to record an expression of humble and hearty thanks to Him who saveth our life from destruction, and also crowneth us with loving-kindness and tender mercies.

A NIGHT AMONG CHINESE PIRATES.

EVERYBODY knows that the coasts of China are sadly infested with pirates. Of this ugly fact I was forcibly reminded as I stood on the deck of the good ship S—, in which I was to sail from Hong Kong to Amoy. As we were about to weigh anchor, a boat came alongside, from which several Chinese sailors clambered on deck and inquired for the captain. Having found him, they explained that they had been deputed by the captains of eight junks which were bound for Kap-Che, to ask whether he would consent to be their convoy for protection against the pirates. Our captain having a well-armed ship, and being an old naval officer, was nothing loth to undertake the task. The two passengers (myself and another) offering no objection, the bargain was soon concluded, and we set sail. As the old barque stood out of the harbour, with her eight clumsy-looking little junks around her, she looked very much like a hen with her chickens. The ten guns that peeped out from her port-holes, however, qualified her to act the protecting part of the cock should occasion require.

For the first four days of our voyage the only enemy we had to contend with was the strong head-wind, against which neither we nor our convoy could make much progress. Every evening at sunset we were obliged, in compliance with the timorous usage of Chinese sailors, to come to an anchor in some bight or bay. To

men accustomed to travel by steam, this seemed slow work ; yet I did not regret it, since it afforded me opportunities of going ashore to visit several towns and villages on the coast, which are rarely seen by Europeans. Wretched enough these outlying villages looked. With their mud-built houses, their few and dingy shops, their narrow and filthy streets, where fat pigs strolled about, and children, scarcely less fat, were their companions, they gave the visitor no very exalted idea of the so-called Celestial Empire. These sea-coast villages, however, mean-looking as they are, would in less populous empires rank as cities. They owe their existence to the fisheries, which are so industriously prosecuted along the whole seaboard of China.

But to return to our voyage. The wind, which for four days had so retarded our progress, on the fifth increased to something like a gale. Our poor junks, and our puissant selves, had enough ado to hold our own. In the teeth of such a gale, progress was out of the question, and a safe anchorage for the night was the chief anxiety. The only safe anchorage which seemed at all available, was that marked in the charts as Mico Bay. To reach that was the object for which we and our junks now toiled hard. If we could only get round that headland, we should be safe. But no ! tack after tack still found us on the wrong side of that bluff cape ; and at last we were forced to come to anchor in a small and exposed bight outside of that Mico Bay which had been our "desired haven."

While we were dropping anchor, the ship's carpenter (a Chinese man) came up to the captain, and with a look of importance in his face said, "That no good ship," pointing to a strange junk, which was just then crossing our bows ; "she a pirate."

"Pirate !" exclaimed the captain, taking up his telescope and surveying the junk indicated. "I see no signs of piracy about her."

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The carpenter walked off, evidently in a huff at the little importance attached to his warning; and the suspected junk dropped anchor alongside of one of our convoy.

Night fell, and as dark a night as evil-doer could wish. About nine o'clock, while I was trudging up and down the quarter-deck with our captain, our eyes were dazzled by a flash, followed instantly by the report of a gun. We stood still, looking rather than saying, "What can be the meaning of that?" Presently there came another and another and another of these ominous sounds. Our captain rushed off, mustered all hands, gave orders to load all the guns, and clear for action. While this was being done—and it was the work of a very few minutes—the firing was still going on all around us; though, whether it was directed against our ship or others we could not tell. To find myself, peace-loving man as I am, thus suddenly surrounded by "war's arms," was not a little astonishing. Nor was my confidence restored when, on going into the cabin, I found the first mate busied over the open arm-chest and powder magazine, handing out pistols, muskets, cutlasses, cartridges, and other death-dealing articles. Man of peace though I was and am, I selected a cutlass, thinking that in an emergency it would be well to have a weapon for self-defence.

Thus armed, I regained the deck, and found that the firing, though less frequent, was still going on. "Fire right in amongst 'em!" was the fiery young mate's exhortation to our old captain. "No, no," replied the captain: "when we can distinguish friends from foes, we'll fire; but not till then."

At length the firing ceased, and darkness and silence returned. Still we retained the impression that pirates were somewhere close upon us, and that we must be on the alert, lest, as is their custom, they should stealthily approach, clamber up the ship's stern, and take us by surprise. All that night the matches were kept lit, the

men lay by their guns, and the captain and myself paced the deck. A weary, long night it seemed. But day broke at last. Peering through its first grey light, we counted our junks and found them all there. But where was the stranger which the carpenter had pointed out as a pirate?

"There she is!" cried the mate, "hugging the shore and making her escape!"

The carpenter being called, was asked, "Is that the junk you pointed out last night?"

"Yes," was the quick reply.

Several guns were soon brought to bear on the fugitive. The word "Fire!" was given, and our first shot skipped along the waves, but fell short. The second was not more successful. The third struck, and disabled the rover for a time; but she soon righted again, and stood away beyond further annoyance from our shot.

The daylight being now clear, the captain ordered a boat to be lowered, and boarded one of our junks to inquire into the cause of last night's uproar. He was told that the junk which had just sailed away had attacked one of our convoy, but had been beaten off with the loss of several men.

And so ended our night of anxiety and suspense. But do not suppose, dear reader, that my story is ended; for on that same day we saw a steamer rounding that headland which we had laboured so hard to round and had not been able. What steamer she was or what was her errand to Mico Bay, we knew not. On our arrival at our destination, however, we ascertained that the steamer in question was Her Majesty's Ship "Media;" and that her mission to Mico Bay was the destruction of a whole fleet of piratical junks, a mission which she most effectually accomplished. Had we succeeded in our efforts to get into the anchorage of Mico Bay, we and our convoy would probably have fallen a prey (though

not an easy prey) to the piratical fleet. Let this little incident in my life remind us afresh of the watchful care and merciful dealing of God.

ADVENTURES IN THE NICOBAR ISLANDS.

THE hairbreadth escapes of the servants of God in the mission field have singularly illustrated the protecting care of that fatherly hand which watched over them. Nowhere perhaps has this been more clearly visible than in the missionary annals of the Moravian Brethren. The following curious details are given, in "Brown's History and Memoirs," respecting Mr. Haensel, who laboured last century at the Nicobar Islands, in India.

Besides clearing the land and planting it, in order to procure for themselves the necessaries of life, the Brethren endeavoured to lessen the expenses of the mission, by making collections of shells, serpents, and other natural curiosities, which they sent to Tranquebar for sale, as there was at that time a great demand for productions of this kind in various parts of Europe. At the Brethren's garden near Tranquebar, Mr. Haensel, after his return to that place, had a shop or work-room for the purpose of stuffing these and other animals, preserving them in spirits, or otherwise preparing them for sale; and he sometimes employed two or three Malabar boys to assist him. In the neighbourhood of that town there is a small serpent, called the split-snake. It is black, with a white streak along its back, dividing the body longitudinally. Its bite is extremely venomous; and as it is a very slender creature, it can insinuate itself into the smallest hole or cranny. This means it often enters rooms and closets in quest of food, of which Mr. Haensel gives the following example. "There was a ~~door~~," says he, "in a dark part of my work-room, with a large,

clumsy lock upon it. One evening as I was attempting to open it I suddenly felt a prick in my finger, and, at the same instant, a violent electrical shock, as if I were split asunder. Not thinking of a serpent, I at first imagined that my Malabar boys had, in their play, wound some wire about the handle, and that it was by this I was hurt; and therefore I asked them sharply what they had done to the door. They denied, however, that they had meddled with it; and when I made a second attempt to open it, I was attacked still more violently, and perceived the blood trickling down my finger. I then returned into my room and sucked the wound till I could draw no more blood from it; after which I applied to it some spirits of turpentine, and tied it up with a bandage; but being much hurried that evening with other business, I took no further notice of it. In the night, however, it swelled, and was extremely painful. In the morning, when I went into the work-room, I thought I felt an unpleasant musky smell; and on approaching the door already mentioned, the stench was altogether intolerable. I again asked the boys what nasty stuff they had brought into the room, for they were always playing themselves; but they still denied that they knew anything about the matter. Having procured a candle, I then discovered the cause of all the mischief. About six inches of the body of a young split-snake hung out of the key-hole, perfectly dead; and on taking off the lock, I found the creature twisted into it, and so much wounded by the turn of the bolt, from my attempt to open the door, that it had died in consequence. It had been entering the room through the key-hole, when I thus accidentally stopped its progress and was bitten by it; and considering the deadly nature of the serpent's poison, I felt thankful to God, that, though ignorant of the cause of the wound, I applied proper remedies to it, in consequence of which my life was not endangered. I have been told that the bite of every serpent is accompanied, in a greater or less degree, by

sensation similar to an electrical shock. The name of split-snake which is given to this animal, we considered as descriptive not so much of its split appearance, as of the singular sensation occasioned by its bite."

Mr. Haensel, in his frequent excursions along the coast, was sometimes benighted, and could not conveniently return home; but in these circumstances he was never at a loss for a bed. The greater part of the beach consists of a remarkably fine white sand, which above the high-water mark is perfectly clean and dry. Into this he easily dug a hole large enough to contain his body, and he likewise formed a mound as a pillow for his head. He then lay down, and by collecting the sand over him, buried himself in it up to the neck. His faithful dog always lay across his body, ready to give the alarm in case of the smallest danger or disturbance.

Though the Brethren had little or nothing to dread from wild beasts on the Nicobar Islands, yet in their visits to other places they were sometimes in danger from them. On one of Mr. Haensel's voyages, either to or from Queda, a Danish ship hailed the vessel, and approaching incautiously, ran foul of the stern and broke the log-staff. Having put into a creek, some of the sailors landed near a wood to cut down a tree to make a new one. Mr. Haensel accompanied them, armed with a double-barrelled gun, with the view of procuring some fresh meat for supper. While they were at work, he walked on the outside of the wood eagerly looking for game, and soon discovered among the high grass an object which, by its motions, he mistook for the back of a hare. He immediately took aim, and was just going to fire, when the animal sprang up and proved to be a tiger. Overcome with terror, his arm involuntarily sank down; he stood perfectly motionless, expecting that the animal would instantly spring at him and tear him in pieces. Providentially, however, it seemed as much alarmed as himself, and after staring at him for a few seconds, turned slowly

round, and began to creep away like a frightened cat, with his belly close to the ground; then gradually quickening his pace, fled with precipitation into the distant recesses of the wood.

It was some time before Mr. Haensel recovered sufficient presence of mind to trace back his steps towards the beach, for his heart still trembled within him. As he approached the shore, there was a piece of jungle or low thicket before him, and he was turning to the left to pass round by the side opposite the boat, hoping he might yet find some game, when he observed the sailors labouring hard to drag the tree they had felled towards the water, and therefore he changed his course and went to their assistance. No sooner had he entered the boat, than he discovered on that side of the jungle to which he was first going, a large alligator watching their motions, and which he would certainly have met had he gone by the way he originally intended. Thankful as he was for this second deliverance, he could not help discharging his gun at the animal's head; and by the sudden plunge which it made into the water, and the appearance of blood on the surface as it was swimming to the opposite shore, it was evident the creature was wounded. He saw it reach the land and crawl through the mud into the jungle.

After the officers and soldiers who had accompanied the Brethren to the Nicobar Islands were all dead, and it was known that the missionaries would not abandon their post, the government at Tranquebar required that one of them should act as the royal Danish Resident. This office was frequently a source of much vexation, and even of danger, to them. The Danes, when they formed their first settlement on one of these islands, which they called New Denmark, had conveyed thither a considerable number of cannon; but after the death of all the soldiers, the carriages rotted to pieces, and the guns were suffered to lie on the ground. On one occasion, a *Nacata*, or general of the king of Queda, as he

styled himself, arrived at Nancauwery with a large prow, and five of the guns on board. Mr. Haensel being informed of this, considered it his duty as Resident to protest against the robbery, and spoke to him concerning it. The Nacata flew into a violent rage, and began to use threatening language, pleading the orders of his sovereign. Mr. Haensel replied, with all the simplicity of truth, that his prince knew very well, that as he had laid nothing down there, he had no right to take anything up, and that he would give notice of it to the king of Denmark. He then left him, but afterwards heard that the Nacata threatened to kill him, and thus prevent him from reporting what he had done. The natives also assured Mr. Haensel that it was the general's intention to murder him; but that they would stay and defend him. They, accordingly, stopped till late in the night, when the Brethren desired them to return home, but could scarcely prevail on them to go away.

After they had gone, and just as the Brethren were preparing to retire to bed, they heard a noise without, and immediately after a violent knocking at the door. On opening it, Mr. Haensel was surprised to see it surrounded by a great number of Malays; but though he was much afraid, he assumed an authoritative air, and kept his station at the entrance, as if determined not to let them

The foremost, however, pushed by him, and then the Nacata himself came forward. The Malays immediately crowded into the room, and sat down on the chairs and on the floor, closely watching him, armed with their creeses or daggers. Though Mr. Haensel preserved a firm undaunted look, yet it is impossible to describe his feelings on this occasion, as he expected every moment to fall a sacrifice to their fury. The Nacata then told him that he had come to ask, "Whose property the cannon were to be, the Resident's or his?" To this question Mr. Haensel replied to the following effect: "You have come to the wrong person to make

that inquiry ; for I am only a servant of the king of Denmark, as you, according to your own account, are the servant of the king of Queda. Neither of us, therefore, can determine who shall have the cannon. Our respective masters, and they only, can settle that point. You have told me that you have received orders to bring them ; and I can assure you that I have orders to protest against it. We have both, therefore, only done our duty. All now depends on this point, whether my king or your king has the best right to give orders on these islands, and to claim the property in question." On receiving this answer, the Nacata became quite furious, and began to talk of the ease with which they could kill them all. Some of them even drew their daggers, and showed the missionary how they were tipped with poison. On a sudden they all rose up, and to his imagination seemed to rush upon him ; but instead of this, they quitted the room, one by one, and left him standing alone in utter astonishment at their conduct.

As soon as they were all gone, and he found himself in safety, Haensel fell on his knees, and with tears in his eyes returned thanks to God Almighty, who had so graciously heard his prayers and saved him from the hands of his enemies. His brethren, who had fled into the wood when the Malays first burst into the house now returned, and they mutually wept for joy to see each other still in life.

The Nacata said afterwards that the Danish Resident at Nancatvery was a very great sorcerer, for he had tied their hands that they could do nothing to him.

A FEMALE CRUSOE.

ONE of the earliest travellers on the overland route, in search of the north-west passage, was Mr. Hearne, who, during the years from 1769 to 1771, made three several journeys towards the Coppermine river, in full expectation of finding a northern ocean, the existence of which, it was inferred, would establish the fact of a sea route north of the great American continent. In those journeys he encountered the most frightful perils and underwent astonishing hardships, not a whit less cruel than the worst of those endured by modern travellers; and he manifested unparalleled fortitude in contending against them. The third journey to some extent established the fact, the verification of which was the chief object of his expeditions, and moreover corrected some important errors in the reports of preceding explorers. But we have nothing to say on that subject here. Mr. Hearne's expeditions have long been a dead letter; and we refer to them only for the purpose of introducing an episode in his adventures which strikes us as affording, perhaps, the most remarkable instance of female resources and self-reliance ever recorded.

When Mr. Hearne, with a company of Indian guides, was travelling in the arctic circle, not far from the Lake Athapuscow, one of the guides came suddenly upon the track of a strange snow-shoe. Astonished at the sight, in a region supposed to be hundreds of miles from any human habitation, the Indians followed up the track, and after pursuing it for some distance, arrived at a small hut or cabin, formed of snow and driftwood, where they discovered a young woman sitting alone. She understood their language, and did not need much persuasion to induce her to return with them to the traveller's tent. Here, on being interrogated, she told her story; when it came out that she was a native of the tribe of Dog-

ribbed Indians, who were, or had been, at feud with the Athapus-cans, and that at an inroad of the latter, during the summer of 1770, she had been taken prisoner and carried off to slavery. In the following summer, when the Athapuscan Indians were traveling the country, she watched her opportunity, and, on arriving near the place where she was found, managed one night to give them the slip, intending to find her way back to her own people. In this, however, she was disappointed. She had been carried away in a canoe, and the twistings and windings of the river were so many and intricate, and so often intersected each other, and there were so many lakes and marshes, that she found it impossible to pursue her route. In this dilemma, instead of resigning herself to despair, she set about building a dwelling for a shelter during the winter, and having completed it, she calmly took up her abode and commenced her solitary housekeeping.

She had kept an account of all the moons that had passed ; and from this it appeared that for seven months she had not seen a human face, and had subsisted in this desolate region entirely by her own unaided exertions. How had she contrived to sustain life ? When asked that question, she said that when she ran away from her captors she took with her a few deer sinews. With these she made snares, and caught partridges, rabbits, and squirrels ; she had also killed a few beavers and porcupines, and was not only not in want of food at the period when she was discovered, but had a tolerably good stock of provisions laid up for future use. When the snares made of the deer sinews were all worn out, she was ready with another stock manufactured with sinews drawn from the legs of the rabbits and squirrels which had fallen victims to her cunning. But this "exemplary female" had not only well stocked her larder by the exercise of industry and forethought, but had also taken equal care of her wardrobe. From the skins of the various animals she had caught she had made up an excellent winter suit,

which was not only warm and comfortable, but, according to Mr. Hearne, was put together with great taste and exhibited no small variety of ornament. "The materials, though rude, were curiously wrought, and so judiciously arranged as to make the whole garb have a pleasing though somewhat romantic appearance." Her working implements consisted of the broken shank of an iron arrow-head, and a few inches of iron hoop roughly sharpened into a knife; and with these she had constructed not only her dress, but a pair of substantial snow shoes, and several other useful articles.

The keeping up her fire had given her most trouble. With two sulphureous stones she could, by dint of violent friction and continuous pounding, raise a few sparks so as to kindle a handful of loose fibres of wood carefully picked small; but the labour was wearisome and long; and to avoid the necessity of it, she had not suffered her fire to be extinguished for many months. She was never idle. When fatigued with the toils of the chase, or when she was not under the necessity of hunting, she occupied herself in peeling off the thin inner bark of the willow trees with which the spot abounded, and twisting it into a species of twine. Of this sort of line she had already accumulated several hundreds of fathoms in length; and it was her intention to make of them a capacious net for fishing, as soon as the frost should break up and the streams become practicable.

Of this remarkable female, Mr. Hearne, in his journal, says: "She was one of the finest women I have seen in any part of North America." It would seem that his Indian guides were of the same opinion; and that, while they admired her for the comeliness of her person, they were by no means insensible of the value of her multifarious accomplishments. There was not a man among them who did not desire to have her for his wife; so, according to the custom of their tribe, they put her up to competition, and wrestled in the ring for her—the strongest of the party,

after he had overthrown all the rest, having her duly assigned to him.

We might add a whole volume of reflections upon the cheerful, active, womanful spirit of this female Crusoe, uncivilized as she was, as contrasted with the desponding helplessness which we too often witness among women, and men too, who, with every motive to industry and activity, and every encouragement to exert both, lose all self-reliance under the first shock of adversity, and pass their days in useless indolence and repining. We forbear, however: such a history is better without a set moral, and carries its own comment.

AN ADVENTURE IN THE DESERT.

I WAS engaged, some thirty or more years ago, in a military expedition into Arabia Felix, the recollections of which, coming upon me through this long vista of years, are so vivid, that I cannot help hoping they may possess some attraction for others, especially as encounters have been rare between European troops and the children of the desert.

We became, if I recollect right, first engaged in a contest with an Arab tribe—the Wahabees—through our ally, the Imaum of Muscat. This tribe had made frequent incursions into the territory of that potentate, carrying off the flocks, and committing great depredations. They had also made war with a Bedouin tribe in close alliance with the just-named chief; and for these and other offences, which had been persisted in for many years with impunity, the Imaum determined to attack them in their stronghold, Ben-Boo-Ali, about sixty miles in the interior, on the borders of the Great Desert.

Of this expedition, as it comes not within my personal recollec-

tion, I shall only say that, though commanded by an able British officer, to whom no blame has been attached, it signally failed. About five hundred Sepoys were surprised by about two thousand Wahabees and massacred, and the whole enterprise was thus defeated. It was to retrieve this reverse of the British arms that the Bombay government resolved to send a rather formidable expedition against the offending tribe. It was, if I can rely upon my memory, composed of two European regiments, the 65th and the 47th, and of two native regiments, a force altogether of about three thousand men, with several pieces of heavy and light artillery. The command was given to Colonel Warren, of the 65th regiment.

A delightful sail along summer seas, in summer weather, brought us, in little more than a week, to the spot of our disembarkation on the Arabian coast of the Persian Gulf. A little town, or rather a large straggling assemblage of huts, called Zoar, was the first habitable spot we passed through. Our first encampment was in its immediate vicinity.

Being very young at the time, I had received, somehow or other, the impression that Arabia Felix was, as the term seemed to imply, remarkable for the beauty of its landscapes. Barren mountains and arid plains, the blazing sun and interminable desert, the Arab and his troops of camels, are, to be sure, images of allurement to the fancy, that have been made familiar to us all. But I had expected that these grand naked outlines of nature and of life, picturesque as they are, would have been filled up by details of a softer charm; and my disappointment was complete. As there are periodical rains here to refresh the earth, as in India, verdure there is naturally none, except that of the date groves, which spring up green out of the desert, and defy the heat of the sun to wither them. Plains of sand, varied only by hillocks of sand, bounded by scorched mountains of baked earth, rifted here and there by the heat into wide chasms, down which one might

imagine, at one time or other, torrents had forced their way, fatigued the sight by their sterile monotony. The Arab and the vulture could alone, I thought, live in the midst of this desolation; and the latter would doubtless soon wing its flight from such sterility, but for the human carnage with which the sands of Arabia are so often moistened.

The Arab village is always built, or rather pitched, in the midst of a date grove. There was one, a little to the rear of our encampment, in which Zoar lay refreshingly sheltered. This was an attractive object, that gave relief to the eye, and afforded an extremely grateful refuge from the united power of the sun and the burning sand. Zoar, with its little circuit of vegetation, and its garden-plots, which were kept constantly irrigated by rude artificial conduits of water running in all directions from the wells, was, after our first march, as a spring of life in the waste. Two or three mud towers, and a larger construction of the same material, called the palace of the Sheikh, gave to the place, at a little distance, an air of some pretension. The palace had been turned into a bazaar, where Scindian and Surat merchants sold shawls, attar of roses and various valuable kinds of cloths and silks, to be conveyed thence into the interior. This close juxtaposition of barbaric splendour and barbaric rudeness—this display of some of the costliest luxuries of civilization glittering in the midst of the most primitive simplicities of life—this evidence of wealth and commerce among a people whose wants are the fewest, and whose existence is the wildest—is a peculiarity of many eastern nations, but, more than all others, of the Arabs. The contrast it presented to the rest of the scene before us, piqued and excited the imagination very delightfully. Among the numerous huts huddled promiscuously together, the men were wandering listlessly about, with an air of indolent fierceness, or lying stretched out at length in the shade; whilst the women were mostly employed in spinning the

coarse cloth of which their garments are made. Our morning walks took us frequently among the female part of the little community, who were at that early hour occupied in one of their most picturesque duties, drawing water from the wells—a task always, from time immemorial, imposed on young maidens in the East. But here the damsels wore masks, which were probably no disadvantage to them, as it kept the effect of their graceful figures, and of the stately gait they had acquired from carrying their pitchers on their heads, perfect, without counteraction from faces better left to an embellishing fancy.

Our commander-in-chief, Colonel Warren, who had brought thus far his *batterie de cuisine* with him, gave us a grand regale on our arrival. He invited the officers of the whole force to an abundant repast he had provided for the occasion. He very considerably reflected, that but for this we should have had to fast much longer than would have been agreeable. We dined picnic fashion. Cloths were spread on the grass under the cool shade of the date grove. Our luxuries astonished the natives, as much as we should be astonished could we witness one of the almost incredible banquets which we read of spread by certain Roman emperors. Such feasting they had doubtless never witnessed before. But not merely the inhabitants, by their grave and watchful curiosity, but the country itself, in its waste and wild stillness, and the little hamlet of huts, disturbed by the unwonted revel, told us very plainly that mirth and laughter and jollity are altogether out of their place among the Arabs in Arabia.

Whilst we were feasting, our quarter-master and his myrmidons, with the camp-followers, who were as numerous almost as our force, were forming our encampment, or rather, I should say—for little was observed—pitching our tents. Then intruded on the silence and solitude of nature the many-tongued clamour of Babel. The Hindostanee, Parsee, Arabic, and European languages were

all mixed and confounded together. The confused and varied aspects of the scene, in which the laden and unloading camel were the principal objects, were in the highest degree novel and exciting to those who could contemplate the whole, as we did, from our picnic repast—the good cheer, no doubt, giving an additional zest to the strange living and moving pictures under our eyes.

In this encampment we remained longer than was at first intended, waiting to be joined by a tribe of Bedouin Arabs. We felt here as perfect a security as if we had been in garrison at Bombay: and this feeling was unfortunately carried so far, that, in order to prevent the recurrence of false night alarms, which had once or twice disturbed our camp, the pickets were ordered not to load. Our commandant remained on the beach till the Imaum of Muscat arrived, who accompanied us on our expedition.

That Arab prince and his suite soon formed another feature of the grotesque human scenery that surrounded us. His tents were pitched a good deal to our rear. They exhibited no symbol of magnificence other than their yellow fringes and embroidery, and the yellow banners that floated over their summits. But the prince himself was, on all state occasions, a constellation of splendour well worth seeing. On one of these occasions, a constable of ceremony made to him by our colonel and his staff, he received his visitors sitting on a mat at the bottom of a moderate-sized tent. He was represented to me as a little ugly old man, of a dusky complexion, much darker than Arabs usually are, profusely decorated all over with jewellery. On his turban blazed a diamond head-piece; his slippers were studded with precious stones, and his belt and the hilt of his sword incrustated with other sparkling gems principally diamonds. He must have looked very much like the hideous idol in a pagan temple, bespangled all over with the gorgeous offerings of superstition. The usual salaams, usual pipe and coffee, received sitting cross-legged on mats, the usual silence

and the usual few words of hyperbolical compliment on presentation and on leave-taking, constituted the whole solemnity. It was the subject of talk among the natives and our camp followers during the remainder of our stay at Zoar, and wonderful were the stories we heard of Arab wealth, Arab prowess, etc.

Thus passed our time away in a pleasant sort of dreamy wearisomeness, star-gazing at night on picket, and during the day time wandering among beings who had belonged hitherto, in our minds, only to fable, and listening to fables from their mouths (through interpreters) very like their own history. We were aroused out of this delicious sort of reverie by an event by no means so agreeable, but which acted as an effective specific against dreaming for the rest of the campaign.

The pickets, as I have said, were not allowed to load their pieces. Improving on this order, the captain of one of them had not suffered even his sentries to load. The consequence was fatal. The Wahabees had sent spies into our camp, and had become fully informed of the defenceless state of the outposts. Seven of these spies had been captured and hanged a few days before, by order of the Imaum. Yet no alarm seems to have been occasioned. Taking advantage, then, of our security, and profiting by as dim a night as an Arabian sky ever affords, a large party of Wahabees, mounted on camels and horses, were borne with silent celerity over the waste; and before the moon, which rose late, could throw any intrusive light on their movements, they were in the immediate neighbourhood of the aforesaid picket. As this outpost was composed of Sepoys, it is very possible some spy might have learned that on this spot the very sentinels were virtually disarmed. Having left their horses and camels a good way behind, the Wahabees crept along the ground from sand hillock to sand hillock, burrowing absolutely among the sand, in which their bodies were nearly concealed. The first sentry whose eyes were

directed towards them saw only what he thought a moving sand-heap. Before he had time for closer examination, the Arab had hold of his musket, had wrested it out of his hand, and cut him down. Resistance was, of course, vain. The picket was driven in, and, with a wild "hurrah!" several hundred Wahabees followed close at their heels. They had evidently no plan of attack. It was merely one of their nightly forays of destruction and depredation they were engaged in. They fell upon the left of our camp like a sudden hurricane. All the camels or horses they encountered they slaughtered or houghed, and every straggling man or little throng of men, starting in affright from sleep, they met with incurred instant death. Some of the assailants darted their spears through the tents, whilst others stood at the apertures to sabre those who attempted to escape. Several partial conflicts, however, took place, and two Wahabees were killed. Of our men, in less than a quarter of an hour, there were forty killed and wounded. Among the number of the former was a son of the celebrated James Boswell, who had a commission in a native regiment, and was much liked by all who knew him. By the time our force had turned out, the enemy had disappeared: we remained under arms for an hour or two, and from this time to the close of the expedition were fully on the alert.

CHAPTER II.

THE long-expected Bedouins at length arrived. One morning, a cloud of dust along the distant horizon announced their approach, and presently they became more distinctly visible. They came galloping forward at full speed. A promiscuous crowd of camels, horses, and asses, whose backs were unencumbered with any kind of housing, bore their riders along with surprising swiftness. They were sometimes seen through, and sometimes lost in, the clouds of

dust which they raised. They brandished their swords, sounded them on their shields, and shouted exultingly as they advanced ; and their vanity must have been highly gratified on seeing our whole camp turn out from curiosity to witness their approach.

To these picturesque beings ground on our right was assigned. Here they settled down in a wonderfully tasteful sort of confusion. Viewed from a little distance, the strange wild figures of the men, moving about in warrior guise, or basking at length in the sun ; the sleek and beautiful figures of the horses, standing in every variety of posture ; the camels, rearing or reposing their awkward forms, or remaining fixed in the patient motionlessness of still life from sunrise till sunset ; the incessant and varying gleam of arms, and the shifting shadows of objects before only known to us as a pageant of poetry—composed a picture so completely Arabian, that I felt the keenest regret at having no knowledge of that “serene and silent art” that would have enabled me to preserve in my portfolio something like a correct impress of its charm.

Sometimes I would see our red-coats and the Bedouins at a mimic fight together. But between them there was about the same difference in these sham combats as there was between the formidable double-edged Arab sword and the useless spits with which our officers were at that time equipped, or rather encumbered ; and the contrast was still greater in other respects. The tall form, muscular, well-built limbs of the desert warrior, fully developed by constant exercise, his sallow complexion, long black hair, dark eye of fire, set off with the best effect by his tunic, urban, and sleeveless cloak ; the spear which he carried in his hand, the shield upon his arm, with his sword, and his kresse in his belt—completed a figure which, when mounted on a fine horse, was really inspiring to look at. But the domestic habitudes of these descendants of Ishmael most pleased me. Their animals they regarded quite as part of the family, partaking with them, often

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from the same basket, of dates, rice, and dried fish, to which the quadrupeds seemed to be, in lack of more suitable food, very well reconciled. In the evening, moreover, the primitive character of these people in their worship came most strikingly out. Separating into bands, the Bedouins went out, as the sun sank behind the mountains, to perform their orisons. After casting handfuls of sand upon their heads, they bent, covering their faces with their hands, to the earth, and muttered their invocations. They would then all stand up for a while, and go through various prostrations and genuflexions; whilst the softened, slant streams of the setting sun gleaming upon them, would give them a fantastic appearance. But before these living pictures, which seemed to have as much of imagination as of reality in them, had lost their charm of novelty, we were on the move.

The breaking up of our camp was a stirring spectacle. Tents taking down, camels loading, regiments forming into line, officers mounting, the motley variety of Indian, Arab, and European costumes, formed some of the details of its organized disorder. Our sultry marches that followed, with a tropical blazing sun on our heads, and the burning sands under our feet, were the only real suffering we had to endure, but it was by no means a slight one. The fatigue itself of marching fifteen or twenty miles a day, in such a country and climate, was much severer than that of a march double that distance in Europe. The first day sufficed to peel the skin off most of our faces, which we were obliged to invest in our silk handkerchiefs, to keep them from further scarification, till they got inured to scorchings. In crossing the ghauts (mountains), three of our men, who were in charge of some elephants that had been procured to drag a few heavy pieces of artillery through a very difficult pass, died of the heat, which was more than once intensely aggravated by a delusive refreshment which sometimes cheated our senses. Once I recollect, during a day of more than

usual fatigue, a sudden exclamation of joy burst from nearly a whole regiment. The village where we were to encamp was suddenly before us. Its date groves, towers, huts, transparent springs, even camels laden with water, coming out to meet us, were all vividly portrayed—alas! it was only by our imagination—on the illuminated sands. It was some time before we found out that this was a *mirage*. Some, whose fancies were oriental, then conjured up mosques and tanks; others, streams, villas, and flocks; and some were animated by the inspiring vision of a stag-chase sweeping by them. After this we had another ghaut to pass, from which we had an extensive view, and got sight of the distant desert, which appeared like a sea in restless undulation.

I recollect not much more of the incidents of our march to Ben-Boo-Ali. We had nightly apprehensions of attacks on our outposts, but were allowed to advance quite unmolested; chiefly owing, I believe, to the scouting watch our Bedouin allies kept up for us far round about in all directions. At these outposts the officer on duty might enjoy the contemplation of such a night scene as is never seen in a European clime. The intense and perfectly cloudless blue of the firmament, and the brightness of the heavenly host, much more numerous visible than in western latitudes, canopying uniform barrenness and lifelessness—except the little green quiet date grove, with its pleasant noise of water running perpetually from the wells, and the sleeping camp, speckled with its white tents the surrounding waste—made the sky so much the absorbing object of attraction, that one might understand once why the Arabs and Chaldeans were the first discoverers of the science of astronomy. But, of all the stars that studded the vault of heaven, the officer and sentinels on these occasions were most on the look-out for the one which Milton calls

“Fairer of stars, last in the train of Night:”

for its appearance announced that the picket would be speedily released from its watch.

At last, we came in sight of Ben-Boo-Ali. At some distance it looked very grand indeed, especially after the barren, bare, unsightly, unadorned track we had waded through. It was situated in the close neighbourhood of three of the largest date groves we had seen, and was sheltered by a fourth, which lay in the midst of them. It might be considered as the great metropolis of the whole Wahabee tribe in this part of Arabia. Several towers, three or four of them of ample circumference and of great height, rose up from among the trees. From the tops of two of them we discerned the flickering of arms, and men moving about, and were immediately afterwards saluted by a discharge from one of our own guns, taken from Captain J——. At this time the bones of poor T——'s men, which lay scattered about, bleaching in the sun, the skulls grinning horribly through their white teeth upon us, were at our feet; and our martial ardour was not a little moved thereby to retrieve the former disaster.

This, however, would not have been a very easy task, had the Wahabees, trusting less to their personal bravery and prowess, displayed but ever so little skill in military tactics; and for the following reason. In order to attack the enemy, or to bring our guns to bear on their town with any effect, it was necessary to traverse the largest and most thickly planted of the groves I have mentioned. In doing this, it was impossible to preserve even an appearance of rank or order. The trees stood so close together, and the sands were so heavy, that we were obliged to scramble through them, man by man, the best way we could. But to these natural impediments, the Wahabees had more than sufficient time to add artificial ones. They might have cut down the trees or thrown up barricades to block our way; or, should such precaution be considered too scientific to have been expected from them, they

might at least have planted ambushes in the grove, and have kept up a most deadly fire on us in our passage through it. They suffered us, however, to advance without the slightest opposition; and even when our men issued out, one by one, from the entanglement of the wood into the adjoining plain, which was faced right opposite by another grove, they continued quite passive.

Our whole force was drawn up in two lines—the Europeans in front and the Sepoys in the rear—on this plain, before we saw aught of the enemy. And then, it was only by getting a view of them through telescopes, from one of their towers which we had left behind us, that we found out where they were. There they were—a thrilling spectacle—in the grove just fronting us, their dark figures made apparent by the glitter of their arms—a whole tribe, for the last time under the congenial gloom of their own shades, coiled up for one final spring of desperation, and doomed to perish within a few minutes.

A little firing from a rifle company soon brought them out upon us. It was a sight to move pity, to behold the wild sortie of the poor creatures from their shelter. They rushed forward, a confused crowd, in a frantic manner. At first they shouted, and performed capers like a dance; then they threw stones at us, and appeared quite bewildered what to do, when a discharge from a couple of our field-pieces, that made fearful gaps in the frightened throng, brought them to the possession of their senses. They fired off their firelocks, darted their spears before them, and in a second were wielding, with terrible effect, their double-edged swords on our ranks. Their onset was so sudden, and their mode of attack one for which European soldiers are so little prepared, that they threw the left of our front line, on which they had precipitated themselves, at once into disarray. Hand-to-hand fights, in which the Wahabees had greatly the superiority in many instances, took place, and they seemed so far to be gaining great advantage; when

our commander formed the European part of the force into three sides of a square, and ordered an independent firing to be kept up, which soon checked the partial disorder that had taken place. The Wahabees, however, were not yet daunted; and it was not until they had got into our rear, and had perceived a body of fifteen hundred fresh troops prepared to support, in case of need, those with whom they had already been engaged, that they were seized with a panic, flung down their arms, and fled. In little less than half an hour the whole affair was over. Of our men, about sixty were killed and wounded. Of the Wahabees, we counted next day nearly five hundred, dead or dying on the field of action.

Without further opposition worth mentioning, we took possession of Ben-Boo-Ali. We slept that night in our cloaks, under the walls. The next morning we visited the place in detail. It was only a larger Zoar; but its desolation was most melancholy. Its empty huts; the scattered housewife's implements; the signs of recent habitations, where there were no inhabitants; the idle wells; the water-courses unsupplied with water; the trampled gardens, but yesterday neat and flourishing; the despair preceding immediate destruction, that had thrown everything hither and thither; the groves themselves, so bereft and solitary; all seemed to mourn the sudden catastrophe; whilst our prisoners, huddled together, a wretched band in deplorable plight, looked on with lack-lustre eyes at the spoliation of all their household goods and treasures, by their careless, joyous, laughing, and joking victors. Everything portable, of sufficient value, such as spears, kreeses, swords, and shields, some of which were inlaid with silver, rewarded the searchers after such spoils; and all the large stores of dates, rice, and dried fish, of late the common property of the whole Wahabee settlement with their hoard of coin and precious stones, by no means inconsiderable, were disposed of to the Imaum, and so converted for us into prize-money. The stronghold itself, before we left, was set fire

to and razed to the ground by order of that prince. To gratify him, we remained before Ben-Boo-Ali till the five hundred corpses of the slain, bloated to an enormous and frightful size by the heat of the sun, sent forth an odour that would have bred a fever in our camp, had we remained much longer. On picket at night, one might see flights of vultures descending on the bodies, flapping their wings over them, whilst their busy beaks were at work. Such are the horrors of war, even on a small scale.

Sunning themselves on the ramparts of Bombay, about a year afterwards, I saw some of our Wahabee prisoners, and, among others, one of their chiefs, with whom I had made some acquaintance, and could communicate by signs. As the bird in its cage sings happily of fields and groves, so the Arab, in his captivity, solaces himself with the recollection of his arid sand plains, his waste ocean desert, and the green spot on its border, his night skies of transcendent splendour, his nightly forays and onslaughts, and all the rude simplicities of his wild life. So, at least, I interpreted the kindling eye and animated gesticulation of the old Arab chief I have alluded to, when I spoke to him of Ben-Boo-Ali. This is my last reminiscence of my military adventure in Arabia.

LOST ON THE FELS.

THE traveller on the Newcastle-on-Tyne and Carlisle Railway, leaving the line at Haydon-bridge, will, if he turn towards the south, find himself very shortly in the midst of scenery for which his railway journey will have little prepared him. Instead of the fertile and well-wooded vale of the Tyne through which he has just passed, a region bare and bleak appears before him. On every side great ridges of hills, or, as they are called in that district, "fells," rise in gloomy grandeur, their tops often, even in the height

of summer, covered with snow. As he passes along the seemingly interminable road, a few stray houses, or a smoky smelt-mill, are the only signs of life that appear; and so bare and sterile does everything seem, that he finds it difficult to imagine that wealth of any kind can be gathered from such a region. But riches, vast and incalculable, are there hidden—beneath the surface of the earth, it is true, but only waiting the persevering energy of man to be brought forth and turned to good account. He is in the great Aliendale mining district, from whence is extracted all the celebrated lead, which, stamped with the distinguishing letters “W. B.,” finds such a ready sale in every market.

After travelling for many miles along an ever-rising road, he will reach the little hamlet of Allenheads, the centre of the mining district, and the highest village in England. The inhabitants of this strange corner of the world are distinguished by a primitive simplicity of manners, which very few would imagine could be found in busy England now-a-days. It is not my purpose, however, to dwell upon their characteristics. The following narrative relates one of the incidents which are unhappily common in Aliendale. The snow gathers every winter to an enormous depth on the sides of the “fells,” so that the roads are nearly, if not entirely, impassable; and from the deep “cleughs” which abound, it is almost certain death for any one to wander in a snow-storm off the proper track. Many unwary travellers have thus perished; and though the following adventure happily did not terminate fatally, its history may nevertheless be of interest to some who are entire strangers to such scenes, and who, perhaps, could not believe them possible in England.

About ten o'clock one wintry evening, in the middle of the great snow-storm of December, 1860, one of the engineers left Allenheads mines-office, and proceeded to his lodgings, a short distance from it. On arriving at them, however, he found his landlady

plunged in the deepest distress. It appeared that her husband, who had only recently come into the district as a mine inspector, and who was quite unacquainted with the locality, had gone over the fells into West Allendale about mid-day; and though he should have been at home by six or seven at latest in the evening, he had not yet made his appearance. The engineer, who was well aware of the dangerous nature of the road which the unfortunate man had to take, was at once alarmed, and in a few minutes he had commissioned one of the miners to raise a searching party, and to procure as many lanterns for their use as possible. This was very soon accomplished; for in a village like Allenheads, none can know whether the service, which in such cases they are doing for others, may not, ere long, be required for themselves; and, conscious of this, they are ever ready to afford such assistance.

No time was to be lost, for all the experienced fellsmen expressed great anxiety respecting the object of the search. He might have fallen into one of the numerous gorges abounding by the side of the path, and in which snow to the depth of from twenty to thirty feet was accumulated. Once in one of these, unless he was immediately discovered, he would be lost; for the loudest cry for help could not reach any of the few thinly scattered cottages which are to be found in that barren region; and long ere morning came, the falling snow would have buried him and covered every trace of his fate. More probable still was it, that, worn out by his fruitless battling with the blinding snow, which, above, beneath, and all around, seemed determined to overcome him, he had ventured to rest an instant, and in that fatal moment had fallen into that sleep which knows no earthly waking. Under any circumstances, however, it was felt that his situation was one of the extremest peril; and within an hour of the first alarm being given, the band of searchers, to the number of ten, set forth on their gallant undertaking. Shortly after leaving the village, they re-

ceived an accession to their strength in the persons of three young men, who joined them at a little nest of cottages called Low Houses. Here their anxiety was somewhat relieved by the intelligence that the missing man was not alone, a mason employed at the mines having accompanied him on his journey.

Toiling on through the snow, which was everywhere very deep, the party arrived at a place called Swinhope Head, where a house afforded them a few minutes' shelter. Here a halt was called, and a consultation held as to the most advisable course to pursue. It was resolved to divide the party; the first six of them to go over the fells to West Allendale, and the remaining seven to stay where they then were, unless they received intelligence of the missing men not having been found, when, refreshed by a few hours' sleep, they were to proceed on a general search.

The first party at once commenced their explorations; and now their real difficulties began. As they ascended, by the aid of their dimly burning lanterns, the snow-laden side of the fell, they had to exercise the greatest caution, lest they themselves should be overcome by some hidden peril. In many places the snow rose like a wall of dazzling whiteness right across their path, to a sheer height of more than twenty feet; this, however, was a visible danger, and not therefore so much to be dreaded; but in other places, where the surface of the snow seemed perfectly level and harmless, deep "cleughs" were concealed, in which the whole party might have been easily swallowed up. Often the drifting of the snow had been so great, that they were compelled to pass through places where they sank in it up to the middle, and from which they could only be extricated by the most vigorous exertions, or the assistance of each other. On the top of the fell, a halt was again made under shelter of a lofty snow wreath; and the feeble lanterns having been once more trimmed, and a few minutes' breathing time allowed, the descent was commenced. An exclamation from one

of their number drew the attention of the others to the spot where he stood; and there, to the heartfelt joy of all, some almost obliterated footprints were discovered. An old hand in such matters, warning the others from approaching too near, knelt down and carefully blew the freshly fallen snow from one of the prints, and, as the result of his exertions, was able to see that he who had made it had been travelling in an opposite direction to that in which the searching party was going. From the number of footprints made, there could be little doubt that the track so fortunately discovered was that of the missing men; and the searchers at once turned round and began rapidly to follow it up. A heavy fall of snow commencing at the same time, warned them to lose no time in doing so, for ere long the marks would be entirely hidden.

But though they had thus hit upon the track of the lost ones, their anxiety for them was by no means relieved. They saw from how much they had been fatigued; and from the way in which they wandered about in all directions, they knew that the unfortunate men had become quite confused in their geographical notions, and could, therefore, be unable to move steadily in the right way. Another circumstance added to the anxiety of the searchers. They had themselves lost their way, and had only a very vague idea of their position. Without more than a passing thought to themselves, however, the gallant little band pushed actively on in pursuit of the track; here and there it became straight and steady for a short distance, and then resumed its old crab-like mode of progression. In these cases they knew that the fall of snow must suddenly have ceased, and by a momentary glimpse of the stars in the frosty skies, the two lost ones had been enabled to move more readily than usual.

The lying snow was now very deep, and what was of more consequence, so soft that they sank in at every step. Suddenly, as

they were moving on, one of their number gave a loud cry, and immediately disappeared beneath the surface, and was quickly followed by another, though in a different direction. A sad moment was that for the brave little band, for they knew they had stumbled among the "peat-pots,"* which abound at one part of the fell-side. By dint of vigorous exertions, the unfortunate burrowers were rescued by their happier comrades, though in no pleasant plight, for the "pots" were more or less filled with water, which, when exposed to the keen night air on the dresses of the party, at once froze, and by no means added to their comfort.

Innumerable were the falls of this description which they had now to encounter, but they boldly persevered, and discovered another trace of the objects of their exertions, in the shape of a "peat-pot," into which it was evident they had fallen. The snow in it was seven feet thick, and at the bottom was a water drain. Had only one man been crossing the fell, he would have had but little chance of saving himself, if he had fallen into such a chasm. The "peat-pots" had done the searching party good service, however, in one respect, for they had sufficed to point out to them their real position; and so, after a few minutes' sharp walking, they recovered the turnpike road, which they had the satisfaction of seeing had also been reached by the missing men.

This discovery greatly allayed their fears; and though, on arriving at a lonely cottage, they learned that nothing had been there seen of the wanderers, they nevertheless had now good hope of their safety. They went on to Carshield, where they thought it probable they might be found, but without obtaining any tidings of them; at last, however, after a further weary walk along the almost snowed-up road, they reached the small village of Coaleclough about half-past four A.M., and there, to their intense joy, found the

*The "peat-pots" are large pits in the fell-sides, from which the peat—which almost universally used for fuel in the district—has been dug.

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objects of all their labour, safely housed; one of them, indeed, was snug in bed, and so sound asleep that it was with great difficulty that he could be roused.

While the worn-out explorers were partaking of some doubly acceptable refreshments, and, in doing so, learning to appreciate the value which all arctic voyagers place upon good tea, they heard the story of the two missing men, who, it appeared, had lost the track when only a short distance from their destination, and once having done so, had wandered about for hours without recovering it; but at last they had reached the "peat-pots," and, alarmed by the accident with which they had then met, they shortly afterwards commenced shouting for help, and, being happily heard by some men dwelling at a little distance, had been rescued by them, and after six hours' wandering conveyed in safety to the place where they were now found. They could not believe that they had returned into West Annandale, for during all their peregrinations they had been under the impression that they were gradually leaving their homes, instead of receding further from them. How many times the kind and ever-watchful providence of God had rescued them from death during that night no mortal can ever know; but it needs not a fellsman to appreciate all the perils, terrible dangers, and "hair-breadth 'scapes" which it was then their lot to encounter.

After an hour's rest, the whole party set out on their way homeward, and on the top of the fell discovered the remainder of the original searching party, who, alarmed for the safety of their comrades, had set out to seek them. A little further on they encountered, at short intervals, two more strong bodies of men from Allenheads, bent on the same errand; for the whole of the inhabitants of the village had now become thoroughly alarmed, not only for the safety of the two lost ones, but of the gallant little party who had risked their lives in seeking to recover them.

Their spirits raised by the hearty cheers with which they were greeted, the weary travellers stepped briskly forward, and had the pleasure, at eight o'clock, of restoring to the anxious wives their missing husbands, after having spent nine hours of the long winter night in recovering them.

NARROW ESCAPE FROM A SNAKE BITE.

"ONE summer evening, as I walked alone through the woods, a noise, some yards off to the left, suddenly arrested my attention. I was walking where I had no expectation of meeting with any human being, yet I thought I heard the voices of people conversing. I stopped short, and looking round, saw a party of travellers, with a packhorse, passing along among the trees, in an opposite direction to myself, about fifty paces on my left. Just at that part a packhorse was an unusual thing, bullocks being generally used for this mode of conveying baggage. My curiosity being thus excited, I still continued to gaze. Suddenly I heard the peculiar rustling that a large snake makes in passing through very dry grass. It was as distinct as if my ear were laid close to it. I looked. It was at my very feet. A long brown snake was uncurling himself and stretching away his lithe and hateful shape from off the very spot on which my right foot would have been placed at the very step I was about to make. The bite of the species is considered to produce death in two or three hours, and to be so rapid in extending itself through the system as scarcely to leave any hope from the most speedy excision of the part. My consciousness was instantly all about me. I saw that there had been but a sound between me and all that comes after death, that what it might. It was coming very close to the brink of the

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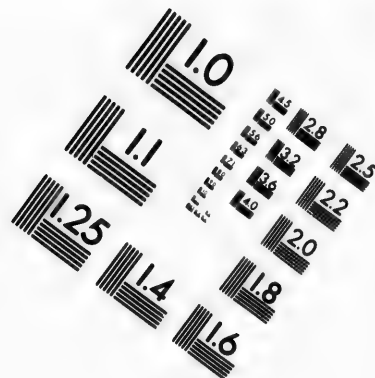
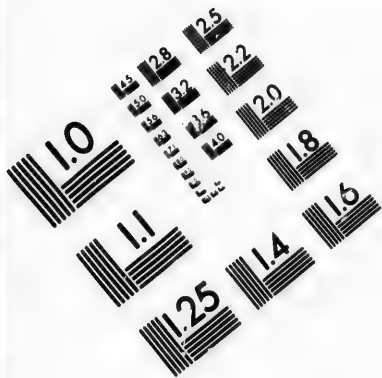
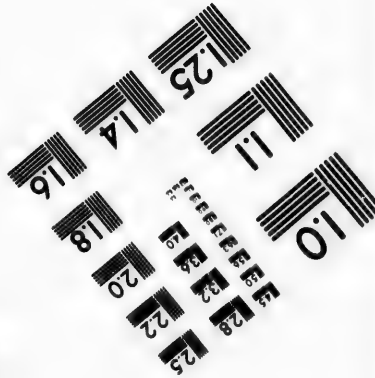
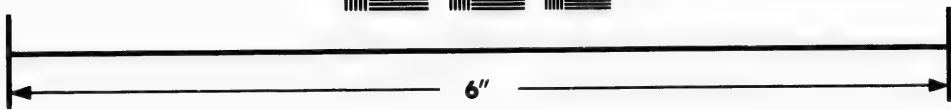
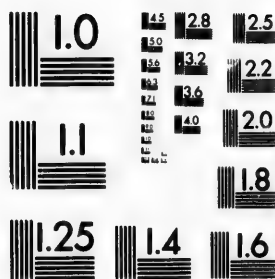


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void abyss, that I as yet had as the only representation of futurity. It compelled me to look fairly into it. I could not help thinking whether I might not have a soul, and whether that soul might not have a God to answer to for the deeds done in the body."

This narrative appeared some years ago in a work entitled, "A Testimony to the Truth," which contains the account of several remarkable deliverances which the writer of it experienced in Australia, at a time when he was emerging from the dark and dreary blank of atheism into a life of faith in Christ. The incident referred to was one of the escapes which happened to its author just as speculative infidelity was on the point of giving way in his mind. It illustrates the coincidence which so often is found to occur between escape from peril and a peculiar state of mind existing at the moment of deliverance in the person rescued.

"Something," observes the author in question, "was required to stir me up into practical activity. And I think nothing more remarkable in itself and its adaptation can be instanced in the history of human life than what took place. A series of providences followed, the overwhelming tendency of which will be allowed to have been just what was needed. And what they tended to, they accomplished. For a series of years I met with such striking deliverances in imminent hazards of life, that, unless I had done it wilfully, and had obstinately resisted their admonitions, I could not but be aroused to the most distinct feeling of the necessity of determining what was truth, and of acting in conformity to it."

AN ADVENTURE ON BEACHY HEAD.

IN the line of lofty cliffs of chalk which form the south-eastern boundary of England, the bold promontory known as Beachy Head is one of the most remarkable. Its elevation from the level of the sea, when it lies calm in the sunshine at its base, is five hundred and eighty-eight feet; and as the situation of the cliff is one of the most exposed along the whole line of coast, it follows that a moderate breeze suffices to send the waters chafing and foaming up its rugged face. It will be readily believed, therefore, that in a south-westerly gale gigantic waves come rolling in with indescribable fury, bursting in thunder against the stupendous wall of chalk rock, and throwing sheets of foam half way up its entire height.

The crest of the cliff is visible far out at sea; the last expiring beams of day linger on its summit, tinting it with a rosy hue when the sun has sunk to rest below the horizon. How many a wistful eye has looked upon it from the deck of the "outward-bound,"

"When slow the ship her foamy track
Against the wind was cleaving,
Her fluttering pendant looking back
To that dear land 'twas leaving."

The young cadet, who has just torn himself from the embrace of his widowed mother, has gazed upon it with a full heart as it gradually faded away in the grey of evening; and then, when returning home after a lapse of twenty or thirty eventful years, the master of wealth and honours, the well-remembered outline of the cliff has met his eye in bold relief against the brightening sky at sunrise—

"While homeward-bound with fav'ring gale
The gallant ship up channel steered,
And, scudding under easy sail,
The mighty headland first appeared."

But another picture still forces itself on the imagination: how often in raging storms, while the good ship, laden with the treasures of the East, and crowded with passengers, has been labouring in the trough of the sea, in the blackness of night; while the captain has been pacing the deck anxiously, looking out to ascertain his distance from that dreaded lee shore, a vivid flash has lighted up the towering headland in all its ghostly whiteness! Woe, woe betide the unhappy ship that in such a night has not miles of sea-room! If once she approaches that frightful precipice, her doom is sealed. At each successive flash of lightning the stupendous wall of chalk is more vividly revealed; while sheets of foam are tossing themselves half up the height, and the thunder of the surf is heard mingling with the thunder of the clouds, and the booming note of the guns fired as signals of distress. A moment more, and the noble vessel is lying a helpless wreck at the foot of the rock. Such calamities have, alas! been frequent; and it was off this point, about three years ago, and within sight of the cliff, that the unfortunate "Dalhousie," bound to Australia, foundered in deep water, when all on board perished except one solitary seaman. The height of the cliff has been already mentioned—it is five hundred and eighty-eight feet; but some readers may form a better estimate of its elevation by comparing it with some objects familiar to the eye. Well, then, the cross of St. Paul's Cathedral appears a great height, as you look at it from the foot-pavement in St. Paul's Churchyard—it is three hundred and forty feet; and the burnished top of the Monument of London is two hundred and two feet from the ground; but if some magician could take the Monument between his fingers and thumb, and place it on the top of the cross of St. Paul's, the height would still be forty-six feet less than the top of Beachy Head, and he must put a good four-story house on the top of all before the altitude of the mighty cliff would be attained. With these preliminary remarks, we will now

begin our narrative of one of the most miraculous and merciful escapes from death on record.

It was on a fine afternoon in September, in the year 18—, that three friends, young men, set out from the village of Eastbourne to walk to Beachy Head, the distance being about a mile and a half. One of the three was a collector of fossils, and he took with him the little hammer which he commonly used for breaking the lumps of chalk which so often contain specimens of antediluvian shark's teeth, echini, and shells. Arriving on the beach below the cliff, they found the sea almost calm, and wandered about for some time searching for agates and pebbles; and one of the three—the fossil-hunter—found among the shingles a large spike-nail, a relic, perhaps, of one of those fearful wrecks which are not uncommon at this awful point. Perhaps he held the old superstitious opinion that it is lucky to pick up and preserve any piece of old iron. At all events, the spike-nail was safely deposited in his pocket, and he wandered on, intently searching for fossils along the base of the cliff, which frowned above his head. Presently he came to that spot where a portion of the topmost strata of chalk has crumbled away, and fallen like an avalanche upon the beach below, forming a sloping rugged wall, to the height of about four hundred feet, with numerous crags and fissures, which might tempt a chamois or a hunted fox to search for a pathway, but which offered no likelihood of a hold for human foot. But our narrative will perhaps proceed more easily and naturally in the language of the adventurer himself.

“I was so occupied with my search among the masses of chalk which lay at the foot of the cliff, that I had for a full half hour parted from my companions; and when I raised myself from my stooping posture to look for them, I was surprised to find that I had gradually climbed a good way up a narrow shelving track, which seemed to present no obstacle to my further progress. My

friends were not in sight: they had probably gone along the beach beyond the projection of the headland. It was of no consequence; I should see them presently; and so I continued my ascent, finding from time to time specimens which absorbed my attention, and made me quite regardless of the increasing difficulties of my path. On a sudden, however, I was startled by the scream of a seagull, and, looking round me, was at once aware that I had reached a point of considerable danger—that, in fact, it would be quite impossible to retrace my steps for the last twenty or thirty feet that I had mounted, and that I had no alternative but to proceed onward, in the hope of finding a track by which I could descend. In this situation I shouted to my companions; but they were not in sight, nor could I perceive any moving object on the beach, which lay far below, or on the expanse of sea, over which the sun now glared through a rising fog-bank in the west—a blood-red disk resting on the horizon. No time was to be lost; it would soon be dusk, and the peril of my path would be increased. At every step my footing became more and more insecure; and when my hand or my foot loosened a fragment of chalk, down it went, rushing and bounding and disturbing other projections in its course, until I heard the sullen distant crash as they fell upon the beach below, and read in that sound a warning of my inevitable fate if I should lose my hold.

“But to retreat was impossible. I had now arrived at a spot where the cliff rose perpendicularly overhead. About twelve or fifteen feet up was a fringe of grass, which gave me hope that there must be a ledge of rock, which would afford a better footing. But how to reach it? How was it possible I could climb that wall? And should I fail? It was an awful moment. We talk of fervent prayer, and sometimes, when ensconced in our cushioned pew at church, we think that we are praying earnestly for blessings to be bestowed or dangers to be averted; but, ah! how dull and

languid are such prayers compared with the aspirations of him who is standing on the brink of destruction, alone, as it were, with God, while death hovers over him in the gathering shades of night! At such a time he does indeed feel his entire dependence on the sustaining arm of Him who is 'mighty to save;' and his heart is strengthened and his nerves are braced while he remembers that 'the Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.'

"My situation was becoming desperate, and I had not a moment to lose. My hammer was still in my hand, and I recollected the spike-nail I had found on the beach, and drew it from my coat pocket. With the hammer I dug out little hollows in the chalk for my feet, and then, driving in my spike above, I held by it while I cut the next; and the next, and thus I proceeded in my slow and most hazardous task until, at the end of an hour, as nearly as I could guess, and just as the dim twilight was deepening into night's darkness, I succeeded in clambering upon the grassy ledge. Success was it? I was at a height of four hundred feet at least, and above me the cliff rose nearly two hundred more—its bald and rugged top rather overhanging the narrow shelf on which I was crouching, so that to climb it, even if I had nerves of steel, would have been entirely hopeless.

"At this moment my hammer, which had rendered me such good service, slipped from my hand and fell. I dared not watch its fall down that frightful precipice, but I heard its chinking sound as it struck two or three times against projections in its course; and it sounded on my ear like a funeral knell.

"It was now nearly dark, but I could just perceive two or three moving figures on the beach, and I shouted to them with all my power; but the distance was great, and the noise of the waves upon the shingle must have drowned my voice. I saw them walk leisurely away; and commending myself to the providential care of

Him who had preserved me thus far, I made up my mind to the necessity of spending the night where I was, with the faint hope that at daylight I might be able, by hoisting a signal of distress, to obtain assistance.

"But now a new difficulty began to press upon me: hunger, thirst, and fatigue were taking hold of me; my hands, swollen and wounded, and my finger-nails, worn down to the quick by grappling with the rock, caused excessive pain. Yet in spite of all this, I began to feel a drowsiness which I dared not indulge; for there was no friendly branch or twig to which I could fasten myself, and to fall asleep on that narrow shelf of rock, would be to fall into the sleep of death.

"From this imminent peril I was preserved in a manner which, while I live, will, I trust, ever dwell in my memory, and serve to raise my aspirations of gratitude to Him whose merciful providence is over all his creatures, and who in this hour of misery and distress sent me help in the form of a friendly sea-bird. A scream, and then the flapping of a seagull's wing, roused me from my stupor. It came and went as the bird wheeled round me, and then sailed away far, far below. Another came and went, and came again; and thus the pair hovered about me in the darkness, through the weary hours of that fearful night, and their screaming notes and the flapping of their long wings, so near me at times as to fan my face, became as music in my ears, bidding me look up to Him who alone had the power to save me from destruction. No doubt the poor birds had their nest in some crevice near me, and their natural efforts to scare away an invader of their territory, proved the means of safety to me. And so my eyes were 'held waking,' and I gazed on the deep blue sky, 'fretted with golden fires,' and watched the great constellations—the Bear, and Orion, and Cassiopeia—as they moved around their central star, and saw the planet Venus rise from her ocean bed and walk the sky in silent beauty.

I looked wistfully toward the east, and longed, oh, how earnestly! for the day.

"At length the first streak of light appeared, and from that moment my eyes were turned constantly to the beach below, in the hope of descrying some fisherman, for I knew that they were often early at their work. The light gradually increased, and I was just able to distinguish objects at that distance, when to my great joy I saw a man close to the water's edge. Happily there was little or no wind, and I had the better chance of making myself heard. I waved my hat and my white handkerchief, and shouted, using my hands as a speaking trumpet; presently the man stopped, and turning slowly round, stood gazing at me. I renewed my shouts, and was answered. The sound of his voice rose distinctly to my ear, backed as I was by the reverberating rock.

"'Hold on a bit,' he said, 'and I'll tell the coast-guard people.'

"Here was a ray of hope; but *how* could they help me? There was but one way that appeared possible—they might lower ropes from the top of the cliff; but should I have the courage or the strength required for the ascent? Yes, if it came to that, I *must* find resolution to meet a danger which scarcely equalled that to which I had been already exposed. I knew not how long a time elapsed, for I had neglected to wind up my watch, but it seemed hours before I saw or heard anything of the promised assistance. At last I heard, through the still morning air, a voice above my head, and, looking up, saw the heads of two men projecting over the edge of the cliff; they were lying on their faces, and were lowering a rope; it looked but a thread as it swung gently backward and forward in the morning breeze, and when at last it reached the place where I stood, it was swinging more than a yard from me, because the edge of the cliff projected so much. It was

shaken, however, by the men, and still swinging backward and forward. Watching my opportunity, I caught the end and drew it towards me. It had a loop tied in sailor's fashion, and I knew *that* would not slip; but, alas! the line was but small, and I much doubted if it would bear my weight—perhaps the men had underrated *that*—for I was near six feet high, and weighed nearly fourteen stone. I shouted to the men, 'Will it bear me?'

" 'Ay, ay,' was the answer: 'have you *pluck* ?'

" 'Ay, I hope so,' was my reply.

" 'Then make it fast round your body, and swing yourself quietly off—steady now!'

"I question whether any criminal, when submitting his neck to the gentle attentions of the hangman, ever experienced a more deadly sensation than I did at that moment. A cold damp stood on my brow, and my heart beat audibly as I passed the cord round my chest, and secured it in front with the best knot I was master of. Then I knelt and looked up to the clear sky, and in a few fervent words commended myself to the Divine protection.

"The men above called out:—

" 'Say when you're ready.'

"I looked up, waved my hand, and cried:—

" 'Now!' and feeling the rope tightening and lifting me, swung myself off from the ledge, keeping my eyes fixed on the cliff as I felt myself slowly rising. Presently there was a stop, and, looking up, I found that I was still about a hundred feet from the top. I could see but one of the men's heads, and he was in the act of removing a large fragment of chalk which had been disturbed by the friction of the rope, and which, if it had fallen on my head, must have killed me instantly. He did succeed in removing it; but, as I afterwards learned, I was held by his one companion alone while his hands were so occupied. Again I began to ascend, and hope returned. I heard the voices of my deliverers as they

gave each other the word to haul together; and I rose, and rose, and at last felt my wrists seized by a friendly grasp, and fell stretched upon the turf. I just heard the hurrah that was uttered, and then for a time lost all consciousness.

"When I revived, I found myself in bed at a little inn, where, by the aid of kind and watchful care, such as English hearts and hands are ever ready to bestow, I recovered in a few hours from the effects of my perilous adventure.

"It may readily be supposed that such an escape became the prevailing topic of conversation, and that I was for some days 'the observed of all observers.' The impression left on my own mind I will not pretend to describe. Those who read my narrative will believe how earnestly and how heartily at church on the following Sunday I joined in those expressions of thankfulness for daily preservation with which the Liturgy abounds. On that same Sunday evening, when alone and unobserved I walked at sunset on the beach, and looked again upon the face of that terrible cliff, how deeply did I feel the force and beauty of those passages in the Psalms which had already cheered me during the lonely watches of that memorable night. With my Psalter in my hand, I lingered, reading and musing until the daylight faded; and when the moon rose in calm serenity from the blue horizon of the wide waters, and I read again by her light, words, which though bearing a deeper and loftier meaning, may yet be reverently adopted to express the utterances of a thankful and devout spirit,—'Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. He shall defend thee under his wings, and thou shalt be safe under his feathers; his faithfulness and truth shall be thy shield and buckler.' 'My soul hangeth upon thee: thy right hand hath upholden me.' 'Thou shalt make room enough under me for to go, that my footsteps shall not slide.' 'I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help. My

help cometh even from the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved, and he that keepeth thee will not sleep. The Lord himself is thy keeper, the Lord is thy defence upon thy right hand.' ”

ROBBING THE DEAD.

A SINGULAR train of circumstances occurred to me, many years ago, which may serve to illustrate the dealings of Providence. Owing to a series of heavy pastoral labours, I deemed it advisable to recruit my exhausted strength by a change of air and scene, and was induced to pay a visit to one whom to hear was to admire, and whom to know was to esteem—my valued friend, the Rev. W. M——, of B——. The good man welcomed me with his usual hospitality, and in the evening some hours were passed in various important discussions. In the course of the conversation I mentioned a remarkable instance of what appeared to be an interposition of Providence, to which my friend agreed, adding this observation: “The man who watches the leadings of Providence will never want a providence to watch.”

Some months afterwards I was again a visitor at the house of my friend, and said to him, “Do you remember the observation you made when I last saw you—‘The man who watches the leadings of Providence will never want a providence to watch?’ ”

“Certainly I do; I remember it well.”

“Then, if you please, I will regard that sentence as your text this evening, and I will offer the commentary. You uttered what I regard as an important truth, and the circumstances that arose out of the events of that evening will confirm you in your opinion. While we were conversing together that evening, if you remember,

the servant came into the room to inquire for how many visitors chambers were to be prepared. You replied, 'Four,' mentioning Archdeacon H——, Mr. V——, and two other gentlemen, whose names I now forget. I immediately exclaimed, 'My dear friend, these four visitors must be coming to you by a previous appointment.' The answer was, 'Yes, and they cannot arrive until a late hour.' 'Then,' was my reply, 'your house will have enough to do to provide for all these guests; and, in compassion to you, as I am a self-invited visitor, I will change my plan, and not stay here this evening.'

" 'Nonsense, my dear sir; I am delighted to see you,' was the reply.

" 'To stay would be unreasonable; therefore, let an obstinate man have his own way.'

" 'Well, if you go, it is your own act and deed. Will you visit Mr. ——, the churchwarden, who is often inquiring after you?'

" 'No, I will remain with you until nine o'clock, and then take my leave.'

" At nine o'clock I took my departure to the hotel to which I was recommended, and was shown into a private room. Finding it was too early to retire to rest, I requested of the waiter the morning or the evening paper.

" 'I am sorry, sir,' said the man, 'but the papers are gone; it is after the hour at which we despatch them.'

" 'Never mind; do not take any trouble about it.'

" The waiter withdrew, and in about a quarter of an hour entered the room with a paper in his hand.

" 'In one of the supper rooms, sir, I have found a paper; it is about ten days old, but I thought you might possibly like to see it, so I have brought it down.'

" 'Thank you; it will do very well, I have no doubt, for the short time I have to spare.'

"I began to read, and the first paragraph attracted my attention by its singular heading, namely, 'Robbing the Dead.' Its singularity led me to read it. It was to this effect: That an examination had been carried on before one of the police magistrates in London, in consequence of a robbery committed at sea. A gentleman from Honduras, in a delicate state of health, had taken his passage to England, and during the voyage he became exceedingly ill, and died. Shortly after his death, the cabin-boy observed the mate enter the gentleman's berth, and, induced no doubt by curiosity, the boy watched the mate, and saw him take a bag, which he supposed to contain money. This bag the mate secreted in the hold of the vessel. The cabin-boy immediately informed the captain, a search was made, and a bag of dollars was found near the spot described. The mate was put into irons, and when the vessel arrived in the river, was handed over to the police. The evidence before the magistrate being conclusive, the offender was committed for trial. The deceased gentleman was a stranger to the captain and the crew, and was known to them only by name. This name, mentioned by some of the witnesses, was one that was very unusual, and it occurred to me as I read it that I had heard it before, and that a family bearing it, or something very like it, lived in my neighbourhood; I therefore copied the paragraph into my pocket-book.

"Early the next morning I proceeded on my journey, and arrived at my own home about mid-day; but feeling very much impressed by the paragraph, I lost no time in proceeding to that part of the parish where the family I had in view resided. It consisted of an elderly lady, the widow of an officer, and her daughters. I paid them a pastoral visit, and in the course of conversation I remarked, 'I think I have not the pleasure of seeing all your family?'

'Oh, no,' was the reply; 'but I hope you will see them all.

and that very soon, for I am expecting my noble and darling son home.'

" 'Indeed; then he is abroad, I presume?'

" 'Yes; and we have had charming letters from him; he has been employed by the British Government, and he tells me that the authorities have made honourable mention of his name, and, as a mark of their approbation, that they have presented him with five hundred pounds for a very difficult survey which he has recently accomplished. In his last letter, which was from Honduras, he tells me that he is about to return to England, that he may again see his mother and sisters; and I cannot express how anxiously we are longing for his arrival.'

"I made no remark, but immediately withdrew, and dispatched a letter to a relation of the family, living a few miles distant. In this letter I gave an outline of the circumstance, and requested his attendance. He arrived, after some delay, and in great tribulation; at the same time telling me he had searched for the paper I had named, but that, although it was not a fortnight old, he could not procure it, and there was no mention of the affair in other newspapers. At length, by the aid of a friend, he had found a copy of the journal, and saw at once that my fears were too well founded. He entreated me to proceed with him to the lady's house, and to make known, in the most prudent manner I could, the sad intelligence that would bring the bitterest sorrow into their household. I accompanied him as he desired, and made the communication, guarding it in every way that truth would permit; but the instant the object of our visit was conjectured, the aged mother fell to the floor, and the sisters of the deceased officer were scarcely less agitated.

"When the sufferers had in some degree recovered from the shock which this blow to their fondest hopes had naturally caused, the question arose, What is the best thing to be done? I urged

that their relative should proceed immediately to London, apply at the police office, make himself known to the magistrate, learn all the particulars, and take the proper steps to secure for the widow and her daughters whatever property there might be in the vessel belonging to the deceased. The advice commended itself to the approval of all; and the gentleman took his place to town by that night's mail, and the next day had an interview with the magistrate, who was disposed to render his aid, but required some additional evidence of identity. In this perplexity the relative produced my letter, which, as it professed to come from the incumbent of the parish, and bore the proper post-mark, the magistrate accepted as satisfactory, and ordered an officer to accompany the gentleman to the dock, where the vessel was expected to be taking in her cargo.

"The vessel was found preparing to sail. On the authority being exhibited, the captain stated that he had taken possession of sixteen packages which the deceased had brought on board the vessel, and that, as he knew not the officer's connections, he had fixed his seal upon all of them, that they might remain without loss until a claimant was found. These cases were immediately placed under the charge of the police officer, and in due time opened before proper authorities. Among the papers of the deceased was a memorandum as to some funds belonging to him in the hands of Messrs. C—— and Co., army agents. When the due forms of law had been complied with by the widow, as the nearest of kin, the funds in the hands of the agents and the valuable contents of the sixteen packing cases became the property of the bereaved family; and I have reason to believe that it was found large enough to make a very desirable addition to the income of his weeping mother and his sorrowing sisters.

"Now," I concluded, "all this appears to have been gained for them by the circumstance of my hearing your servant's inquiry,

and then, in spite of your entreaty, resolving not to remain that night as your visitor. Thus, he that watches the hand of Providence will never want a providence to watch."

CHAPTER II.

AFTER the accession to the widow's income arising from the discovery of her son's property, which I had been providentially the means of securing, I became a more frequent visitor, and was at times consulted upon family affairs. The eldest daughter, a young lady of pleasing manners and personal attractions, gave me to understand that she thought of accepting an offer of marriage which had recently been made to her by a gentleman who visited at the house with her mother's sanction, and she added that all points were satisfactory save one, and that one was a source of uneasiness. Her suitor was a confirmed Unitarian, and she mentioned the subject to me as her pastor, asking for my advice; but at the same time hoping that, as her mother highly approved of the proposed alliance, I should not deem his religious sentiments a fatal obstacle. The mother and the young lady were evidently anxious to obtain from me a favourable opinion. My reply was: "If you are in earnest in religion, how can you expect the Divine favour to rest upon such an alliance? No worldly advantages can, in my judgment, compensate for the dangers of such a step. Any person believing in the Divinity of Christ and the atonement offered by him, falls into error by forming an alliance with a gentleman, however amiable, who spurns the doctrine of the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ: therefore, if my opinion be of the slightest weight in your estimation, I am bound in sincerity, but in all courtesy, to express it, by declaring that I am, and must continue to be, opposed upon principle to the marriage."

After this expression of my sentiments, in obedience to their

request. I still continued my visits as a pastor, but soon perceived that, however politely these might be received, they were less acceptable than in former times. Yet, as a clergyman's duties must be discharged in the shade as well as in the sunshine, under painful as much as under pleasing circumstances, I continued the visits as before, and made known to the young lady the arguments which are employed by our learned divines to confute the errors of Socinianism, and to prove the Divinity of Christ. These arguments, confirmed by reference to the Scriptures, were not without a good effect.

Not long afterwards sickness entered the family, and the young lady was confined to her chamber and her couch. I attended daily for a considerable time; at length, observing from her remarks that a favourable impression had been produced on her mind, and that she no longer regarded the arguments which assailed the plan of redemption and the Deity of the Redeemer as innocent, I said to her: "My dear young friend, your views of the Redeemer and his great work are far more scriptural than they formerly were; but they are still defective. I am sure that this illness has influenced your mind, and is, possibly, one of the ways by which Providence is guiding you to a correct knowledge of that which relates to your eternal welfare. You are in earnest, and I fully believe in your sincerity; and under the conviction that 'none shall seek God in vain,' I declare to you this day, in the name of the living God, that peace of mind and eternal life shall be yours, if you will accept them on the conditions given in that very book which now lies by your side; and these are the conditions—faith in Christ as God over all, and the making a solemn surrender of yourself, and of all that relates to your welfare, for time and for eternity, into the hands of Christ as your Redeemer.

On the following day she informed me of her firm determination to relinquish the acquaintance of her Socinian suitor. Time after-

wards proved the wisdom of this decision, for other reasons besides that of his creed. After this declaration of her Christian faith, the sufferer appeared to make rapid progress in the knowledge of divine things. Among her acts of piety was a deep anxiety, prudently manifested, for the spiritual welfare of those around her.

Our duties were now changed; and I, who was wont to go to her couch as her pastor and teacher, went to learn from one who appeared to live above the world while living in it: a heavenly atmosphere seemed to be shed around her chamber, and even a visitor felt constrained to say, "Surely this is the portal of heaven." Though unable to move from her couch, her faculties were not only unimpaired, but they became more vigorous. Her time was passed in prayer, in studying the Scriptures, and in very pious and happily expressed exhortations to her mother, her sisters, and her friends; and by the beautiful manner in which she exhibited piety in her own person, she proved a comfort to those who came to comfort her.

Some time after I said to her and her friends: "You must lend me to some other people for a short time, for I have received an offer of preferment; and I am anxious, before I decide, to visit the place."

She exclaimed, "You are not going to leave me?"

"Only," I said, "for about ten days."

The next evening being Saturday, I arrived at my destination; and on the Sunday I undertook the duties of the church, intending to do the same on the following Sunday, and return at the end of the ten days. The reception I met with from the patron and others was kindness itself, courteously expressed; there was everything to make the visit agreeable to me; yet on the following morning I arose greatly depressed, and I announced to my kind host that, although I was perfectly well in health, I was so unhappy from some unknown reason, that I felt it my duty to return home imme-

diately. All their influence failed to change my purpose. Without the loss of a moment I started for home ; and on my way the coach stopped for a time at the large town of M——.

A difficulty here presented itself. At a short distance from the town there resided a benevolent man, who felt an interest in our schools, and having some relatives residing in my parish, I thought it possible that he would give me five pounds towards the infant school if I could only see him, as he knew the efforts I was making and the need there was of funds. I walked to and fro, perplexed, as I thought of the wants of the school, and also of the state of my sick friend. At length, so strongly did the subject occupy my mind, that I said almost aloud, "I will not call on this good man, but I will go home to attend to one of God's children, and I will trust to God to provide for his own schools."

In a few moments I had resumed my seat in the coach, under a firm impression that I had decided prudently, and that I was in the path of duty. I reached my own house at midnight. I found the family all up at that unusual hour ; and the moment I entered, the cry was, "We are delighted you have come home : the young lady has been sending almost hourly this evening to know if you had returned."

"Sending every hour!" I exclaimed ; "how is that? I stated to the family that I was to be absent for ten days. There could be no misunderstanding, for they all knew it."

"True ; still, so it is : they have been sending, at the sick lady's request, almost every hour."

Hearing this, without any regard to the time, I started for my friend's house, and reached it about one o'clock in the morning. I found the family all up, and assembled round the couch of the sick lady. The instant I entered, the invalid, gently raising her hands to heaven, said, "Thank God, thank God ! my prayer is answered. I felt sure you would come. I am dying ; but I have prayed to my

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heavenly Father that he would not let me die until you returned, that I might thank you before I die."

She then requested them to raise her a little; and taking my hands within her own, and looking at me most earnestly, she cried, in a voice so solemn, so earnest, yet so affectionate, that it thrilled through my heart, "Oh, my spiritual father, my brother, my friend, may the good and great God bless you for what you have done for me. I am dying; yet I am full of joy and peace. May every mercy and every blessing descend upon you in this world; and, my best of friends, may you and I sit down together at the marriage supper of the Lamb." Thus saying, she reclined her head on her couch, and died.

With palpitating heart I returned home, filled with joy, though borne down with sorrow. How great the privilege to receive the fervent blessing of one whose gentle spirit was just entering the regions of light!

In the morning, at an early hour, I again visited the family, and described to them the sense of desolation which I had experienced during my late absence, explaining that, although among the most attentive of friends, this feeling of sadness had caused me to change all my plans, give up my visit, and without loss of time return home. I mentioned also my deliberation as I passed through the town of M——, and my resolution, although it might be a loss of five pounds to the school, to go home and try to comfort one of God's servants, trusting the care of the school to God's providence. I then produced a letter which the postman had put into my hands as I came out of the house that morning. The letter was from the merchant I mentioned as likely to contribute five pounds towards the school, if I could have called upon him, and explained our position from want of funds. The letter was very short, and simply said that he had heard of my being in M——, and that as I had passed through his town without coming to see him, he would

punish me for my neglect—which he did by enclosing me fifty pounds. Who shall say that God will not provide for his own work? I then alluded to the high tone of piety shown by the departed during her illness, and asked if it were not their wish to partake of her joy and to be sharers in her felicity. I asked them if they would accompany me into the other room, and there, with minds solemnized by the scene, join with me in kneeling by the side of their sainted sister, praying that by God's influence upon their minds there might be no separation in an eternal world, and that, on the morn of the resurrection, we might all arise to behold Christ as our Redeemer, and receive his blessing.

They all readily complied, and the proposal appeared to bring relief to their sorrow. After gazing upon the beautiful and placid form of the departed, we all knelt in prayer to Christ for his Divine blessing upon the survivors, asking that we might become part of Christ's holy family, and be interested in all the mercies of God, obtained for the penitent and believing through the atonement. As God works by means, and as prayer was offered to him who appointed it, and 'who promised to bless it, I humbly trust and believe that the "sighings of a contrite heart and the desires of them that were penitent" were heard and answered on that occasion; for from that day the afflicted mother and the weeping sisters were, in the midst of their grief, made partakers of the departed sister's joy.

"May I not, my dear friend, say that a most remarkable train of providences has occurred since I last was your guest?"

"I grant it most readily," said Mr. M——.

"But I have not yet finished," was my reply, "for I have a third part to add."

"What was it? I long to hear it, for one fact tells more than a hundred arguments."

"As you may suppose, the fifty pounds coming to me at that moment, and under those circumstances, caused me more pleasure

than I can express, and far more than the donation itself could confer. I am not very fond of silent gratitude: if we feel thankful to God or to man, we ought to show it, you know. I thanked my benevolent friend, of course, but I did not end here; for, being delighted with his generosity, I made known in my pastoral visits this kind act, to be added to many others which the people of the town had received at his hands. Not many months after the receipt of his letter, a vacancy occurred in the representation of the town in parliament, and I urged this kind-hearted man, as I knew he possessed experience, leisure, and ample means, to offer himself as a candidate; and although I could take no part in the election, I heartily wished him success. He complied with this wish, and presented himself before his constituents at the proper time. His political views were in unison with the spirit of the place, and the result was shown in my receiving, a few weeks afterwards, what my friend termed an invitation to a gentleman to dine in a kitchen. I accepted the invitation, and saw on the occasion, as my neighbours, the late Sir Robert Peel, and other members of parliament, dining at Bellamy's, which was generally known as 'the Kitchen' of the old House of Commons.

"Here, my good sir, ends my illustration of your text when we last met in this room: 'He that watches the hand of Providence, will never want a providence to watch;' and I, while I live, shall ever bless God that I read the paragraph headed 'Robbing the Dead.'"

BURIED ALIVE IN THE SNOW.

THE WONDERFUL ADVENTURE OF MRS. ELIZABETH WOODCOCK.

THE best introduction to the following remarkable narrative will be the letter of the clergyman by whom it is communicated. "One evening," he says, "during the recent snow storms, I related the story which accompanies this note to a large party of friends. This led to a proposal that I should write the narrative for the Religious Tract Society. I was unable at once to complete the manuscript, and desired to make the details as accurate as I could. I find the story is given, with some variations, in Hone's 'Every-day Book;' but I have reason to believe that my narration, with more details, is the most correct. Many a winter evening has been beguiled, when I was a boy, by the story of Elizabeth Woodcock, from the lips of my now venerable mother, who 'served' Mrs. W. on that well-remembered day, was personally acquainted with all the persons mentioned, and heard the story of the dream and the finding of Mrs. W. from the lips of the dreamer himself, and to whom I have submitted this written account."

It was still bleak winter on Saturday, February 2nd, 1799. The bare hedges and nearest skeleton trees, flecked with partial white, stood out with their branches and stems looking hard and dark against a uniformly leaden sky; the more distant objects of the landscape assumed the striking spectral tenuity which is observable in a misty atmosphere before the fall of snow; whilst "the extreme distance," as artists call it, could not be seen at all, the distinction between cloud-land and solid earth being lost in impenetrable vapour. On such a day, few persons would wish to quit their homes; but the claims of the market were imperative on country farmers or their wives. Produce must be sold and provisions laid in for the coming week. In all weathers it was their habit to go.

Among the market-going women, on that day, was Mrs. Elizabeth Woodcock, the wife of a farmer at Impington, in Cambridgeshire, familiarly known as Betty Woodcock. She set out for Cambridge on horseback, duly prepared for the threatening storm, having a long basket, used for carrying butter in yards (the form in which it is prepared for the Cambridge market), strapped behind her saddle.

Safely arrived at Cambridge, Mrs. Woodcock disposed of her farm produce in the market-place, beside the well-known Hobson's conduit, and then went to a shop behind the Town Hall, at that time occupied by Mr. Hallack, where she was wont to lay in her weekly store of groceries. She was served by Mr. Hallack's daughter-in-law, to whom she was well known, who perfectly well remembers that memorable day, and who describes Mrs. W. as a small handsome woman, with singularly bright and beautiful eyes.

In those days it was an almost universal custom for travellers and market people to take "a dram," or "something to keep out the cold." Many thought it essential to do this; more deemed it salutary; but some even then feared it as a dangerous practice. Of these last Mr. H. was one. Whilst Betty was giving her orders, and gathering her store into her basket, the snow was falling thick and fast, threatening to come thicker and faster still. "Only look," said the kind and pious man, addressing his customer—"only look, neighbour Woodcock, at the weather. See what a night this is likely to be. Do make the best of your way home, and don't stay to get your 'drops' before you go."

On leaving the shop, Mrs. W. went to the inn where her horse, "Tinker," was put up, and, meeting with an acquaintance, who was indebted to her husband for hay, received of him a considerable sum of money in the presence of several other persons, and, after the prevailing fashion, "treated" him with a "glass of something

warm." Disregarding the friendly warning of Mr. H., she herself partook of a similar "treat." Among the persons present was a sinister-looking stranger, who assisted her to adjust certain packages on her horse, and was about to give her a hand to mount. Such politeness deserved some recognition, so the stranger must be "treated," and again Betty must enjoy a like indulgence. Thus "fortified," as she possibly imagined, against the weather, she mounted "Tinker," and set out on her homeward journey. The snow came down in great swirls driven by the wind, half blinding and sadly benumbing the traveller. "I think," says a surviving witness, "I have not seen such a snow-storm since that night until recently."

Late that evening, Mr. Merrington, a farmer of Impington, met Mr. Woodcock coming from his farm, and hailed him. "Whither away, neighbour, this rough night?"

"I'm going to look for Betty," was the reply: "she has not yet got home from market."

"Oh," said Mr. M., "never mind: she'll turn up right enough by and by. Meanwhile, come and have a glass with me"—an invitation but too readily accepted: for, had he kept to his original intention, Mr. W. would most likely have brought back his wife that night.

After a while, the horse came home without his mistress, and the husband, with a companion and a lantern, set forth in anxious haste to seek her. No trace could he find; no tidings could he obtain: even after going to Cambridge, he could only learn when and how she left the inn. More disturbed than ever, he took his journey homeward again, vainly searching along the snow-covered road for sign or trace to account for the missing wife. Neighbours were roused, servants sent out, and search continued all night. Next morning Mr. W. returned to Cambridge, to tell what he knew, and to hear if there were anything that others could tell;

yet he learned no more than he knew before. Conjecture was busy. For several days the country was explored, and search was made in the camp of gipsies, as it was thought possible that some of the restless tribe might have been tempted to the double crime of robbery and murder. The stranger who had seen Mrs. W. receive money, who had been "treated" for his politeness, who had assisted the lost woman to her saddle, and who had not been since seen or heard of, was suspected of having waylaid and murdered the traveller for the sake of her purse; and as this suspicion seemed to be plausible enough, a hue and cry was raised after the strange man, and "detectives," such as that day could produce, were set to seek his track. After a day or two, traces of steps were discovered near a pond, accompanied with a trail of blood upon the snow. Here, then, was there not a clue? The pond was searched in every part, but the search revealed nothing to confirm suspicion. It was soon ascertained that the blood was not that of a murdered woman, but of a slaughtered hare, which had been borne along by some successful sportsman. Every one was at fault. The whole week passed away, so that Saturday came round again without any important discovery, and without the slightest information likely to lead to it. The groups of passengers as they went to market, the gossips at the stalls, tradesmen and customers in shops, and all the "town and gown" besides, talked over the wonder, and the majority concluded that the affair was one of those perplexing mysteries for which no satisfactory solution was likely to be found.

On Saturday night (February 9th) Mr. Merrington, whose meeting with farmer Woodcock a week before has been already noticed, was disturbed and annoyed by a dream, which frequently recurred. Not so fast, my friend. If you anticipate a story of a marvellous dream, almost amounting to a revelation, by which the whole business was made plain, you will be disappointed. And you, my

friend, who despise dreams altogether, do not venture to say that dreams have never any significance. We know that some dreams have been recognised as Divine in their source; "for God speaketh once, yea twice; yet man perceiveth it not. In a *dream*, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed." (Job xxxiii. 14, 15.) Although a large proportion of dreams may be wholly frivolous, he must be more than sceptical who can deny that some dreams have been suggestive and useful. Mr. M.'s dream had no apparent relation to the lost woman, and yet it led to her being found. The dreamer was a keen sportsman, and his visions of the night were quite in character. He dreamed that, in a certain spot on the road between Impington and Cambridge, he saw, and traced to its form, a remarkably fine hare.

On the Sunday morning, having an engagement to dine in Cambridge, he set forth to walk thither, the snow-covered ground just yielding to a thaw. He thought no more of his dreams till he came to the place where "he saw in his dream" that the hare ran across. An idle whim, an unaccountable impulse apparently—but was it not rather a providential suggestion?—induced him to turn a few steps from the road, to examine the position of his visionary hare. He was thus led to notice a small hole in the surface of an untrodden drift of snow, and was startled by hearing a feeble voice in a tone of distress, crying, "Help! Help!" He looked around for the speaker, but not a creature could be seen. The cry was, however, repeated; and as he stood more and more bewildered, he was astonished to see a corner of a black silk kerchief thrust up through the hole in the snow, almost at his feet. He guessed at once whose voice he had heard, and exclaimed, "What! Betty Woodcock, is that you?"

The buried woman was delighted to recognise the voice of a friend, and was now sure of speedy deliverance. "Yes, Mr. M.,"

said she, "indeed it is; do help to get me out." Mr. M. wisely concluded that an immediate and open exposure to the cold might be fatal in its effects, and would be far worse than to leave his neighbour a little longer buried alive. He told her this, and bade her wait patiently for his return. He went at once to procure men with tools, a cart with feather-bed and abundant wrappings, and cordials for the poor fainting prisoner. Meantime a messenger was sent in haste to Cambridge to bring a doctor, whose services were thought to be indispensable at the opening of this singular sepulchre. Mr. Okes, a surgeon, arrived in time to see her in the cart, and attended her home. Her clothes were sodden with wet, and, though her hands and arms retained some warmth, her feet and legs were extremely cold. She was put to bed, and, being carefully tended, hope was entertained of her recovery.

Having mentioned the finding of Mrs. Woodcock, we may now describe, as afterwards learned from her own lips, how she came to be the tenant of the strange lodging she had occupied so long. On the Saturday when she left Cambridge, the snow-storm had thoroughly set in, encumbering with its deposit every fold of the traveller's garments, producing great discomfort, chilling the limbs, and benumbing the extremities. Notwithstanding her ample wrappers, Mrs. W. felt the cold exceedingly. Either because the horse was startled (it was said by some meteor or sudden light), or because she thought to gain some relief by walking, she dismounted, intending to lead the animal home, when he broke away from her. She sought to regain the bridle, but he turned abruptly from the road across an open field. In spite of the boisterous north-east wind, and the hindrance of a basket on her arm, she persisted in pursuing him, and, having recovered her hold of the bridle, retraced her steps in the direction of the road, and made another attempt to lead him towards home. Worn and weary with

exertion, the left foot almost frozen in consequence of having lost her shoe, she felt that she *must* rest a little. Not philosophic enough to know or to fear the consequences, she put down her basket from her arm, sat down (only for a minute) beneath the bank, a little aside from the road, and, letting go the bridle despairingly, spoke to the horse. "Tinker," said she, "I am too tired to go any further; you must go home without me." She then exclaimed, "Lord, have mercy upon me! What will become of me?" In this condition, from the effects of the cold (to say nothing of the *drops* and *treats*), she was, no doubt, overpowered with sleep, though she fancied she slept but little. Tinker, finding the rein loosed from the hand of his mistress, like a wise beast made the best of his way home, and gave the first assurance that his rider had been lost.

Had the snow ceased, it is nearly certain that Mrs. Woodcock would have slept her last sleep that night; it continued, however, to fall in steady profusion "like wool," so that what had occasioned her danger became her best defence. The sleeping woman was speedily and completely covered with a smooth and stainless counterpane, the bank behind her causing a drift over the place where she lay, or sat, some six feet perpendicular in depth from the sod, and between three and four feet above her head. What wonder that her husband did not find her as he passed?

On awaking from sleep, though her feathery packing yielded to the motion of her arms, she found herself unable to rise. Her clothes and one leg, which had probably been stretched out when sleeping, were frozen fast to the ground, whilst her breath had formed an opening through the snow. She knew it was Sunday morning, because she heard the Chesterton church bells merrily ringing for service. She could plainly hear the voices of passengers along the road, and, among others, distinctly recognised the voice of her husband. She failed, however, in every effort to make

herself heard. As time wore on, she perceived the darkness of the closing night, and the light of each returning day. She gradually scooped away the snow, and fed herself with it; thus at length forming a sort of cave corresponding in size with the reach of her arm.

With difficulty she took from her pocket an almanack, to discover the time of the new moon, deriving some hope and consolation from the prospect of relief which she supposed the change would bring. She also ate a few lozenges she had with her, and occasionally refreshed herself with a pinch of snuff from a box she always carried.

Day after day and night after night she dwelt in her frost-built hut, distinctly noting the alternations of light and darkness, hearing the morning and evening bells of her own and neighbouring villages, listening to the bleating of sheep, the barking of dogs, and the sound of carriages along the road, besides overhearing a conversation between two gipsies about a donkey they had lost. When her left hand began to swell, she carefully removed two rings (she had been twice married), and put them along with some money into a small box to take care of them. She frequently shouted; but the snow so stifled the sound that no one heard her, not even the gipsies, who came nearest of any.

On the second Sunday after her disastrous journey, when the Chesterton ringers struck out their peal, she knew that the eighth day of her imprisonment was come, and almost despaired of deliverance, when Mr. M. turned aside to look for the place of his visionary game. Unable to reach with her hand the opening in the snow, she broke off a twig beside her, and thrusting it through with the appended kerchief, thus gave signal of her miserable plight.

About the time the congregations were breaking up, the tidings reached Cambridge that Mrs. Woodcock had been found alive in a

snow-drift. The excitement on this news exceeded that which had been occasioned by the report of her being lost, so that crowds resorted to the spot where she had lain, to verify what they had heard.

For a time the case of this remarkable patient was not considered desperate; but, unfortunately, she became "the lion" of the neighbourhood. Troops of visitors thronged the house, to see the woman who had passed so many days under the snow. The excitement occasioned by too much company was itself unfavourable, rendering the sufferer liable to fever. Each visitor leaving some gratuity, encouragement was given to "drinking healths" and cups of congratulation, probably tempting the patient herself to indulgence ill suited to her condition. Be this as it may, the feet inflamed from the violent effect of cold and frost-bite, and mortification afterwards supervening, she lost all the toes, and the integuments from the sole of one foot. In this mutilated state, though her life was saved, she was quite unfit to attend to domestic duties; and her constitution had been so much injured, that in five months from the time of her living burial she was consigned to a longer sleep and a more permanent grave than beneath the snow. She died on the 13th of July, 1799.

This story was regarded by many as a newspaper fiction. Only a short time after its publication, Mr. Sole, of Caldecot, being in an inn at Bath, heard a company of travellers express more than grave doubts about the newspaper reports; but when he assured them that he lived in the neighbourhood, knew all the persons, and was acquainted with all the facts, his statement was met by roars of derisive laughter. "You must not expect," said his fellow-travellers, "that we are so simple as to swallow such an incredible tale."

An odd scrap of a ballad made on the occasion has been preserved :—

"She was in prison as you see,
 All in a cave of snow;
 And she could not relieved be,
 Though she was frozen so.

Ah, well-a-day!

"For she was all froze in with frost,
 Eight days and nights, poor soul;
 But when they gave her up for lost,
 They found her down the hole.

Ah, well-a-day!

The reader may perhaps inquire whether so marvellous a deliverance from speedy death was not followed by penitence and prayer, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as a preparation for eternity. Her restoration must have been like "life from the dead," and it would be pleasant indeed to know that, in the best sense, this buried woman had been raised up to "walk in newness of life," and through Jesus Christ to enjoy life eternal. Of this, however, I can say nothing. Let those who read see that they do at once what they think Mrs. Woodcock ought to have done:—"Yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead."

AN ADVENTURE IN ARRAN.

It was early on a lovely autumnal morning, in the year 18—, that Ronald M'B—, a small sheep-farmer in the northern district of the Island of Arran, in the Western Highlands, left his home, attended by two faithful collie dogs, for the purpose of gathering some sheep, which were pasturing on a secluded hill at the distance of several miles from the farmstead. Though early in the fall, there was just sufficient sharpness in the atmosphere—the result of the slight frost of the previous evening—to render the exercise of walking pleasant and exhilarating. Ronald felt and appreciated the influence of the time and scene; for he was a man of much

more than the average intelligence of his class, and a devout admirer of nature, with which, in many a solitary vigil, he often held communion on the lonely hill-side, in the romantic glen, or by the desolate mountain tarn, surrounded on all sides by the dreary, monotonous dun hue of the moorland waste.

On the present occasion, the scene was eminently calculated to arouse his sympathies with the beauty and grandeur of external nature. His road lay towards the western side of the island; and, as he turned a shoulder of the hill which he had been for some time climbing, he came full in view of the sound of Kilbrannan, which separates Arran from Argyleshire, heaving and glittering in the rays of the morning sun like an expanse of molten silver. To the south-west he could distinguish the Mull of Cantire, blue and indistinct through the haze; while, still further to the south, the Craig of Ailsie reared its huge form amidst the waters, with its rounded shoulders and precipitous sides admirably adapted to withstand the utmost fury of the billows of the Atlantic. Sailing craft of all sizes spread their canvas to woo the gentle morning air; though seen from Ronald's elevated point of view, they seemed like mere dots on the burnished surface; while here and there in the distance a long pennon of black smoke gave token that omnipresent steam had there its representatives, giving an additional aspect of liveliness and animation to the scene. In his immediate neighbourhood the prospect was one of wild and sterile grandeur. On either hand hills rose into the air, clothed, about two-thirds of their height, with a short, rich, velvety grass, producing unequalled sheep pasturage—the remaining third being composed of lofty, jagged peaks of granite, emerging from their verdant covering, and frowning defiance and destruction to all beneath them. Nor did the threat seem altogether a vain one; for all down their sides, and along the glen through which Ronald now took his way, huge masses lay singly imbedded in the soil or heaped to-

gether, as at different periods they had fallen from the exposed summits :

" Where twined the path, in shadow hid,
Round many a rocky pyramid,
Shooting abruptly from the dell
Its thunder-splintered pinnacle;
Round many an insulated mass,
The native bulwarks of the pass,
Their rocky summits, split and rent,
Formed turret, dome, or battlement."

As he stepped sturdily on to his destination, he absolutely revelled in the cheering sights and sounds around him. With delight he sniffed up the fresh morning air, inhaling health with every inspiration, and feeling his chest expand and his spirits rise at every step of his progress. Overhead he heard the wild cry of the lapwing in its wheeling flight; and ever and anon he was startled by the sudden whirr of the blackcock, as he sprang from his heathery covert, and with rushing wings disappeared over the shoulder of the neighbouring hill. While in the full enjoyment of this state of pleasurable and healthy excitement, he observed that one of his collies had started a very large rabbit; and, the other dog joining in the chase, it seemed to Ronald (who could not help feeling a little interested in the result) that they must soon run it down, particularly as they had headed it down hill, where the long hinder legs of the rabbit told decidedly against it. They gained upon it every moment, and at last seemed just about to seize their prey, when it suddenly slipped beneath one of the huge masses of granite we have before described as lying thickly scattered on the hill side, and disappeared from view. Ronald felt more disappointed than he cared to confess even to himself; for, in the first place, he had become considerably excited during the short chase; and, in the second, he had made up his mind that a savoury addition to his morrow's dinner should have been supplied by the rabbit which had just so vexatiously vanished.

Going up to the rock, he found it to consist of an immense mass of granite, seemingly some tons in weight, and apparently resting on several smaller fragments of the same formation. Convinced that the rabbit lay concealed between some of these fragments, and that he might yet recover it, he stretched himself, face downwards on the ground, close to the foot of the rock, and, thrusting in his arm beneath it as far as he could reach, proceeded to rummage for the object of his search. While so engaged, what was his horror and amazement to feel the huge rock suddenly slip down several inches, and, with irresistible and remorseless pressure, fix his arm, just above the elbow, between its own base and one of the underlying fragments? The enormous mass had been so nicely poised, that the smallest disturbance was sufficient to destroy its equilibrium—a circumstance, as is well known to geologists, of not infrequent occurrence; and hence the frightful result. Ronald's first instinctive impulse was to endeavour to withdraw his arm—for the pressure, though severe, was not sufficient to crush the limb; but a moment's consideration convinced him of the utter hopelessness of the attempt: he was as immovably fixed as if he had formed a portion of the rock itself.

And now how bitter were his reflections, how dreadful the revulsion from his previous state of cheerful buoyancy! The contrast was too cruel, and, manly as he was in character, the big tears rolled from his eyes as he thought of the terrible doom which might be in store for him. And, in truth, his situation was sufficiently awful to justify the most desponding presages as to his fate. He was at a distance of several miles from the nearest habitation, and the spot was so lonely and sequestered, that he might die of starvation ere any chance wayfarer was likely to take that direction, and so discover his position. His mind filled and confused by these fearful anticipations, he found himself unable to collect his faculties sufficiently to reflect with calmness on the misfortune

which had befallen him, and to estimate the prospects of relief which a cool review of the circumstances might have suggested. The prolonged pressure on his arm, too, was becoming more and more intolerable; and, as time passed on, the pain, combined with the continued want of sustenance, gradually told upon his system, and he sank into a species of stupor or syncope, which happily relieved him for a space from his state of suffering. How long he remained in this condition he could only guess by the position of the sun, which, when he recovered his consciousness, gave indication that several hours had elapsed.

As he looked around him with a vague hope of descrying some means which might lead to his release, nothing met his eye save the desolate granite-dotted heath, of which he was the solitary occupant, and the expanse of sky, now becoming overcast with heavy lowering clouds, portending a mountain storm. Indeed, occasional large drops of rain already began to fall, and the wind swept in fitful gusts along the course of the ravine. The only exception to the utter loneliness of the prospect consisted in the presence of some marsh-loving bitterns and curlews, whose heavy flapping flight, and wild "eerie" cries, rather added to than relieved the dreary aspect of the whole scene, and, combined with the threatened inclemency of the weather, increased the depression and misery of the unfortunate prisoner. But it was no time to indulge in unavailing regrets or impotent despair. He resolved at least to make an effort towards his release. The first thought that flashed across his mind was to amputate his arm with his clasp-knife. Finding himself foiled, however, in his endeavour to reach the pocket in which it was deposited, reflection came to his aid, and convinced him that even should he succeed in severing the limb, he must inevitably sink by exhaustion from loss of blood before he could hope to reach a place where assistance might be procured. Dismissing this idea from his mind, therefore, he

bethought him of his faithful collies as the only feasible means of effecting his deliverance. These poor animals had manifested the utmost distress and solicitude when they perceived their master's misfortune. They ran whining and sniffing round the rock as if seeking for some means of relieving him, returning every now and then to fawn upon him and lick his face, in token of their affection and sympathy. Calling them to him now, he endeavoured to make them comprehend that he wished them to set off for home, hoping that their arrival there would serve as a means of alarming his family as to the cause of his continued absence. For a long time his efforts were unsuccessful. Their very affection for him proved the greatest obstacle in his endeavours to render their services effectual. Though when scolded away they retreated for a short distance, they returned time after time, crouching fawningly at his side, as if humbly deprecating his displeasure. Almost despairing, at length it occurred to him that his youngest boy was the constant playmate, and consequently special favourite of the eldest collie, Laddie, which had been reared on the farm from a puppy. Addressing him, therefore, in shepherd phrase, he exclaimed: "Hie away wide, good Laddie, hie away wide; seek Allister, good dog, seek Allister;" and his heart throbbed with renewed hope when he saw the sagacious animal's eye light up with a look of pleased intelligence, and at the same moment, pricking up his ears, with a joyful bark and a bound he set off at the top of his speed. Left thus alone, Ronald hopefully reflected that "man's extremity is God's opportunity."

Arrived at the farm-stead, honest Laddie found his master's small household busily engaged conveying home and stacking the last portion of the season's peats—the Highlander's staple fuel—which, having been cut about the month of June, are allowed to dry and harden on the surface of the peat-moss until a later period of the year brings sufficient leisure to have them carted home and

secured in stacks for winter's use. The sagacious collie soon found out his young master, busied like the rest; and having paid his respects in his own way by leaping up on him, and licking his face and hands, began to conduct himself in so singular a manner as at once to attract the attention of all. Running a short distance along the road which led to the hills, he looked back anxiously at the young lad and gave a piteous whine; and seeing that he was not followed, repeated the manœuvre again and again, till at length, coupling his strange behaviour with the fact of his presence without his master, a suspicion began to be aroused that some accident had befallen the latter—an idea which was confirmed by the vehement symptoms of joy the dog displayed when Allister offered to follow him. Convinced that something was wrong, and fearing they knew not what, the members of the family sent in all haste for a number of their nearest neighbours, and after a hurried consultation, having provided themselves with ropes and other implements which might be useful in any species of accident, and a few simple restoratives, set out on the route which Ronald had followed in the morning, to the manifest delight of the faithful Laddie. That sagacious quadruped immediately constituted himself leader, and trotted sedately in the van, turning every now and then with the greatest gravity to see that his followers were keeping proper rank and order in their line of march.

My story is nearly told. In due time they arrived at the spot where the poor prisoner, much exhausted, still lay in wearisome inaction in his strange durance. Amidst many expressions of surprise at the singularity of the accident, and commiseration of his sufferings, the party proceeded with the utmost caution to effect his release; an achievement which they found much more difficult than they had anticipated, owing to the ponderous size of the rock, and the dread of inflicting further injury upon their unfortunate friend. At length, however, chiefly by attending to

his own directions, this object was happily accomplished ; and, placing the patient upon a litter, he was carefully conveyed home and put to bed, where he lay many days under medical attendance before he was sufficiently recovered to resume the active duties of life.

AN AWKWARD ADVENTURE.

ONE evening in the autumn of 185—, during a temporary stay at a muddy little fishing station near the junction of the river Avon with the Bristol Channel, an adventure befel me, which might have been attended with very untoward results, and which I shall relate as briefly as may be. I had taken my residence for a week or two in the neighbourhood, for the express purpose of holding communication and exchanging occasional visits with an old friend and schoolfellow, the captain of an Indian trader then lying at anchor in the roads. We generally spent our evenings together, either on board his vessel or at my lodgings, but always separated about an hour before midnight. The old boatman, who two or three times a week rowed me off to the vessel and brought me back again, happened to be out of the way one evening at the accustomed hour ; and while I was waiting, almost ankle-deep in the brown sludge which the receding tide leaves upon the coast, expecting his appearance, a decent looking middle-aged man pulled towards me in the merest cockle-shell of a craft, and, touching his hat of glazed tarpaulin, volunteered to supply his place. Without hesitating a moment I stepped into the boat, and, seating myself in the stern, pointed to the "Bhurtpoor," lying about a mile and a half in the offing, and told him to pull away.

The season was approaching the equinox, and, the wind blowing fresh, my appetite for dinner sharpened as we got clear of the mud-

banks, which, as the tide runs out, rear their broad backs above the surface in that part of the river. The sun had sunk nearly to the level of the mountain tops in distant Wales, but was still shining brightly when I took my seat; but we had not proceeded a mile before a dark cloud rising in the west, from which quarter the wind blew, rapidly curtained him from sight, and twilight came on much more suddenly than usual. The black cloud was the precursor of an angry squall, and I could discern the advancing scud glooming over the waters at a few miles' distance. I did not relish the notion of being caught in it, as with it was also advancing, as usual, a heavy shower of rain, against which I had no defence; and I urged the boatman to pull away with a will. "Ay, ay, sir," said he, tugging at the oars, "trust me for putting your honour aboard without a wet jacket."

For about two minutes the little boat, under the impetus of increased exertions, danced forwards at a more rapid rate. Already I could see the hands on board the Indiaman hastily furling some loose sails, which, as the vessel lay at anchor, had probably been let down for the purpose of repairs. I was watching the seaman-like evolutions of the crew, and marvelling at the instantaneous disappearance of every rag of canvas, when I became suddenly aware that my companion had stopped rowing, and that the boat, under the influence of the receding tide, was drifting out of the right track. "Pull away!" I shouted, turning my eyes to where he sat, while the big drops from the black clouds, now right overhead, began splashing down like liquid bullets upon us. The man, however, neither moved nor spoke, but, with crossed arms, clasping the oars to his breast, sat stiff and rigid as death. His eyes were darting from their sockets, and glaring on all sides as though in an agony of terror; his mouth, firmly set fast, yet spluttered forth foam at the corners; his face, abnormally swollen, was of a livid black colour; and the veins of his forehead stood out

like an iron net-work ; while the perspiration streamed off his head in a perfect torrent.

What to do I did not know. I concluded that the man was in a fit of some kind or other ; and I feared momentarily lest, in some sudden paroxysm, he should flounder overboard, and perhaps upset the boat, causing the destruction of us both. I would have given much to have had a friend with whom to advise, but advice was out of the question. While I sat deliberating, the squall burst upon us with unmitigated fury. The floods came down a perfect waterspout, and the winds tossed us about among the chopping billows to such an ugly tune, that in a few minutes the boat was nearly half full of water, and I was fain to take to baling out with all my might, making use of an old saucepan, rusty and shorn of its handle, which lay amongst the loose planks in her bottom. Still there sat the wretched waterman, rigid as a corpse, and apparently insensible to the assaults of the tempest. By this time it was so dark that I could see neither the "Bhurtpoor" nor the coast, and, what is more, did not know in which direction to look for them. I could only see my companion's face by leaning forward and bringing my own almost in juxtaposition with it ; and whenever I did this, the same horrified aspect met my view, and he invariably resented my curiosity by the utterance of a frightful guttural sound, expressive, if of anything, of terror lest I should lay a hand upon him.

The squall fortunately soon mitigated in intensity, and seemed to settle down into a heavy rain. When I had baled out the water sufficiently to remove present uneasiness on that score—and it seemed to me that I had occupied hours in accomplishing it—I unshipped the rudder, and, by dint of no inconsiderable labour, paddled with it so effectually as to keep the boat's head to the wind. That was all I could do, and I could not do that very well, as an occasional sea that broke over the gunwale convinced me a

dozen times at least. After tossing about in this miserable condition a considerable time, which seemed to me an age, I looked at my watch to see how long we had been out, and was amazed to find that not two hours had elapsed since we had started. I should hardly have been more surprised had the sun risen on the other side of the channel and ushered in the morning. My troubles seemed to have endured longer than the whole of the past day, and yet there were eight or nine hours to pass before another would dawn upon us. I began to fear that we should not survive the night; we were probably several miles from the nearest land, but in what direction it lay I had no idea. All that I knew was, that we were drifting down channel, and that down we must continue to drift till the tide turned, which I judged would not be for several hours. I bawled to my companion as loud as I could halloo—bantered him, consoled him, encouraged him, reasoned with him: all, however, was to no purpose; not a response could I elicit. There was, therefore, nothing for it but to sit still and wait the issue. I was wet through to the skin—as thoroughly sodden as if I had been fished up from the bottom of the sea; and every now and then a terrible presentiment haunted me that to the bottom we were doomed to go before the morning.

How long I sat in this state, alternately baling with the rusty saucepan, paddling with the rudder, and gazing moodily at the grim figure of the boatman, now half shrouded in the darkness, I have no distinct recollection, but it must have been a very considerable time. My reflections were none of the pleasantest. The vision of the captain's comfortable cabin, and his well-spread table furnished with the game we had shot together the day before, rose to my imagination with tantalizing force; and there was I, transformed from a delighted and favoured guest to a miserable cast-away, at the mercy of a motionless image, who, for all I knew, might wake up into a raging madman, or die and stiffen in the

position in which he sat, leaving me in the unpleasant predicament of having to account for his fate should I happen to survive him long. Morbid thoughts began to rise in my mind and to mingle with unworthy terrors, both of which I had a difficulty to shake off. At length I began to revolve the matter determinately, with a view to *action* of some sort. I could bear the horrible perplexity of my position no longer, and determined to do something, if possible, to bring it to an end. But what?—that was the question. I stood up and looked around. I fancied I could see a glimmering of light far away to the left, and thought that if I could get possession of the oars I might succeed in making the land in that direction, particularly as the wind had now abated and the storm had ceased.

I cautiously laid my hand upon the man's shoulder, and felt for his fingers: they were hot as those of a person in a high fever. I endeavoured to loosen the oars from his grasp, but I might as well have tried to snap them in pieces with my fingers: they were firm as though gripped in an iron vice. I felt his face and hair; both were hot and bathed in clammy moisture. In spite of the poor fellow's affliction, I grew exasperated with him for venturing out to sea, with the knowledge which he must have had that he was liable to such fearful visitations. Half in anger and half inspired with a sudden idea, I groped in the bottom of the boat for the old saucepan, found it, filled it with the cold brine, and dashed it suddenly in the fellow's face. The shock was instantly followed by a deep sigh and a rather violent gasping. Distressing as these sounds usually are, they were now grateful music to my ears, and, without waiting more than a minute, I repeated the experiment. Directly afterwards I heard the oars rattle in the rullocks, and saw, as plainly as the gloom would permit, that the man was addressing himself again to his work, though in all likelihood he had hardly yet recovered his full consciousness. I spoke to him, but received

no answer. I again filled the rusty saucepan and sprinkled water over his face with my fingers. At length he threw off his hat with one hand, shook himself, and with difficulty stammered forth, "It's all right now."

"All right, do you call it? Whereabouts are we? and what o'clock do you suppose it is? and whereaway lies the 'Bhurt-poor?'"

"Very sorry, your honour—how long is it we've been out?"

"Four or five hours—perhaps six: a pretty scrape you have let me into!"

"Very sorry, your honour; but we'll get picked up before long. Here's a smack a-coming—she'll be down upon us in twenty minutes, and we'll be snug enough on board of her."

I could see nothing of the smack whose approach he announced; but as he assured me again and again that she was fast bearing down upon us, I was but too glad to believe it true. Sure enough, in ten minutes later I could discern her broad white canvas looming forward like an apparition; and soon my companion hailed her hoarsely, and received a reply perfectly unintelligible to me, through the captain's speaking trumpet. She did not, however, heave to, but came dashing past at five or six knots an hour, and seemed about to abandon us to our fate, with a coarse jest flung at us in passing. I had begun exclaiming against this abominable inhumanity, as I supposed it, but the poor boatman interrupted me with, "It's all right, your honour; we'll board her in two minutes." With these words he lifted something white into the boat, bawling out, "Heave-ho!" at the same moment, with the full force of his lungs. The something white was a floating buoy attached to a long line which the smack had dropped for our convenience, and which, on hearing the signal, they now began to haul in with astonishing rapidity. For two minutes we cut through the water like a rocket, and the next ascended the hull of the smack, and

dived down into her cabin, where a few rashers of Welsh bacon and a cup of steaming coffee restored our exhausted strength and spirits. It was past one o'clock when we boarded the smack, and nearly three when she arrived at an adjoining seaport, the place of her destination. I was fortunate enough, through the recommendation of the captain, to find accommodation for the night in a house near the quay, where I retired immediately to bed, and happily escaped any serious injury from the dangerous enterprise I had so unwillingly achieved.

Next morning I encountered the unlucky boatman, still pale and haggard, upon the quay, and sought to obtain some explanation of the wretched experience of the previous night. He was, however, most unwilling to speak on the subject, and, but for the consciousness that he owed me some reparation for a wrong unintentionally done me, it was plain that he would not have uttered a word. As it was, my curiosity was but half gratified. He acknowledged that he was subject to occasional fits; but he had his living to get. He denied that he had had a fit last night, asserting that if he had, he should have gone overboard immediately, as it would have required three or four men to hold him still. He said he saw me and all I did during the whole period, and heard, moreover, every word I spoke, which he could not have done had he been in a fit. From all I could understand of his description of the agonies he had himself undergone, he had felt the symptoms of an approaching attack, and knowing that, if it mastered him in the boat, it must inevitably result in his destruction, had wrought himself up to a determined resistance, and in the danger and darkness of that sudden tempest had manfully battled it out with the dreadful malady, that might else have merged us both in one common doom. The more I questioned him and revolved his answers in my mind, the more I became convinced that this was the truth. Doctors may, for aught I know, pronounce such an effort to be

altogether vain; but I describe the facts of the case pretty much as they happened, and must leave those who differ with me in opinion to deal with the matter as they list.

I had been angry enough with the poor fellow the night before, but the interview of the morning banished my resentment; and as he rose from the heap of iron ore upon which he had been sitting when I came up with him, and staggered feebly towards the vessel in which he had been offered a gratuitous passage home, I could not but feel that there were qualities in him worthy of respect. He would accept nothing for his services, but returned the offer with a dolorous glance of the eye, and a significant curl of the upper lip—and so we parted. Health and peace go with him!

A TWILIGHT ADVENTURE.

AN APPARITION EXTRAORDINARY.

ABOUT the centre of a great dreary common, distant some three miles from the little town of C——, and just at the meeting place of two footpaths, which may be traced far over the sombre waste by their weary whiteness, stand three lightning-scathed elms, battered and seared by fire and storm, barkless, livid, and ghost-like in the dim twilight. And oh! the oppressive solitude and silence of that spot at such an hour.

It was just when the twilight of a September evening lay deepest on the border land of day and night, that my homeward path led me past the blasted elms. The friends I had just left were such as Percy, or Ritson, or Scott would have loved to commune with—full of old ballad lore. Quaint old words, breathed in the soft sweet voice of the mistress of the house to a quaint old melody,

still rang in my ears. And this was the burden that haunted me:—

“As I was walking a’ alane,
I heard twa corbies makin’ a mane;*
The ane unto the t’other did say,
Where sall we gang and dine the day?”

The words of the ballad were well enough remembered, and I was trying to recall the air; but the fourth line baffled me. I could not get it to run rightly at all, and in vain did I repeat over and over—

“Where sall we gang and dine the day?”

in different keys, now higher and now lower.

Wholly intent upon this vexatious interruption to my musical reveries, I drew near to the goblin trees, and, for aught I know, might have passed them unnoticed, had not my little dog Trot, who was trotting quietly on, nose to ground, as was his wont, a yard or two in advance, suddenly stopped short in my way, so that I almost stumbled over him; and he then slunk cowering at my heels. At the same moment there reached my ears a faint rustle as of footsteps through the heather, or perhaps merely the rush of a startled rabbit into the gorse. But be this as it may, ye lovers of the marvellous, what a spectacle met my eyes, as then, for the first time, I lifted them to the blasted elms!

From a huge broken limb of the central tree depended an object that bore the semblance of a living creature, yet altogether unlike any that I had ever seen or read of. It loomed out from the dark background of cloudy sky, likest to one of those vast vampires which travellers have described as sometimes seen in the depths of the South American forest. Like them, it hung by the hind feet to the branch, swaying slowly to and fro. But then it was white—a livid white, like that of the barkless tree—white head, and body,

* I heard two crows making a moan.

and legs, and wide-extended wings. The wind, too, wafted from it a ghoulisb odour, indescribable, that told a tale of fresh-spilt blood.

Confess, now, candid reader, long you not, as I did, to know something more of the monster; to be rid of such a nightmare of doubt; to be able to call it by some known name; to find out whether to laugh or weep, to clap hands or to tremble? How, then, shall I dare to tell you the whole truth, and to call upon you to let your curiosity be as easily satisfied as mine was? How persuade you to think with me, discretion the better part of valour, and to wait with patience equal to mine the possible *dénoûment* of time? The fact is that, after a very brief deliberation, I determined to give the tree and its "uncanny" burden a wide berth, and so arrived at home unharmed, though somewhat startled and confounded by what I had witnessed.

This is, I am willing to admit, a very unromantic, and therefore improper, conclusion to my story. Had I described my horror at the sight—how my very hair rose on end till it lifted my broad-brimmed straw from my head, and how I fled, fear-ridden, awe-spurred, and terror-winged over the wild waste, pursued by unearthly howls, and the flap, flap, flap of strange wings, until I fell half-dead, and so on—this would, of course, be far more interesting, and a more proper and normal termination to my adventure. Of all this I am well aware; but then you see, discerning reader, Truth contradicts oftentimes, and flatly, the notion that he is "stranger than fiction," and in this case brought a very romantic story to a very unromantic end.

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About a week had passed since the evening of my mysterious adventure, when, on taking up the county paper, a certain paragraph caught my eye, and, ere I had glanced far down it, the mystery of my twilight apparition was solved.

"A DARING SHEEPSTEALER.—On Tuesday last, a sheep was

stolen from a field about two miles from this town (C—— itself), in the occupation of Mr. J. D. That gentleman's shepherd counted the sheep, as usual, soon after half-past seven o'clock on that evening, when he discovered that one was missing. Supposing it had got astray on the common, he did not mention it to his master that night. Next morning, by five o'clock, he was out on the common looking for it. When he reached the well-known 'blasted elms,' near the centre, he discovered evident signs, both on the trees and on the ground below, that a sheep had been *killed, or at least cleaned there*. He followed the traces of blood as far as the large chalk hole near H—— Wood, where the skin was found concealed under the bushes, and there all trace was lost. It is clear that the villain or villains, who have so far eluded pursuit, were old and daring hands at the business, as the theft must have been committed before dark, and the sheep cut up close to the footpath that leads from P—— to C——. This path, however, is but little frequented, especially after dark, owing to its bad repute among the country folk."

ADVENTURE AMONG THE HUDSON'S BAY FUR-HUNTERS.

OUR brigade of four boats lay moored on the banks of the great Saskatchewan; which river, taking its rise amid the rugged steeps of the Rocky Mountains, flows through the great prairies and woodlands of the interior of Rupert's Land, and discharges into Lake Winnipeg.

The men were ashore at breakfast. On a low gravelly point that jutted out into the stream, smoked three large fires, over which stood three rudely constructed tripods, from which depended

three enormous tin kettles. Robbiboo was the delectable substance contained in these kettles. Pemmican is a compound of dried buffalo meat, melted fat, and hair—the latter being an accidental ingredient. Mix pemmican with flour and water, boil and stir till it thickens, and the result will be “robbiboo.”

Around these kettles stood, and sat, and reclined, and smoked, about thirty of the wildest and heartiest fellows that ever trod the wilderness. Most of them were French Canadians; many were half-breeds; some were Orkney men; and one or two were the copper-coloured natives of the soil. But Canadians, Scotch, and savages alike, were servants of the Hudson's Bay Fur Company; they were all burned to the same degree of brownness by the summer sun; they all laughed and talked, and ate robbiboo more or less—generally more; and they were all clad in the picturesque habiliments of the north-west *voyageur*. A loose-fitting capote, with a hood hanging down the back; a broad scarlet or parti-coloured worsted sash round the waist; a pair of cloth leggings, sometimes blue, sometimes scarlet, occasionally ornamented with bright silk or bead-work, and gartered at the knees; a pair of chamois leather-like mocassins made of deer skin; a round bonnet, or a red nightcap, or a nondescript hat, or nothing; such is the outward man of the *voyageur*.

“Ho! ho!” shouted the gruff voice of the guide, as the men, having emptied the kettles, were hastily filling and lighting their pipes—“embark, my lads, embark.”

In five minutes the boats were afloat, and the crews were about to shove off, when the cry was raised, “Mr. Berry! hold on: where's Mr. Berry?”

Poor Berry! he was always late, always missing, always in the wrong place at the right time and in the right place at the wrong time. His companions—of whom there were two in charge of the boats along with himself—called him an “old wife,” but qualified

the title with the remark that he was a "good soul," nevertheless. And so he was—a beardless youth of twenty-two summers, with a strong tendency to scientific pursuits, but wofully incompetent to use his muscles aright. He was for ever falling into the water, constantly cutting his fingers with his knife, and frequently breaking the trigger of his fowling piece in his attempts to discharge it at half-cock. Yet he was incomparably superior to his more "knowing" comrades in all the higher qualities of manhood. At the moment his name was called, he sprang from the bushes, laden with botanical specimens, and crying "Stop! stop! I'm coming," he rushed down to the boat of which he had the special charge, and leaped in. Five minutes more, and the brigade was sweeping down the Saskatchewan, while the men bent hastily to their oars, and filled the shrubbery on the river's bank and the wide prairies beyond with the ringing tones of one of their characteristic and beautiful canoe songs.

The sun was flooding the horizon with gold, as it sank to rest. The chorus of the boatmen had ceased, and the only sound that broke the stillness of the quiet evening was the slow and regular stroke of the heavy oars, which the men plied unceasingly. On turning one of the bends of the river, which disclosed a somewhat extended vista ahead, several black objects were observed near the water's edge.

"Hist!" exclaimed the foremost guide, "they are buffaloes."

"A terre, à terre!" cried the men, in a hoarse whisper.

A powerful sweep of the steering oar sent the boat into a little bay, where it was quickly joined by the others.

"Now, then, let the crack shots be off into the bush," cried the gentleman in charge of the brigade. "Away with you, Gaspard, Antoine, Jacques. Mind you don't waste powder and shot on old bulls. Hallo! Mr. Berry, not so fast; let the hunters to the front."

"Ah! Misser Berry him berry bad shot," remarked a middle-aged Indian, regarding the youth somewhat contemptuously. Berry armed for the chase with frantic haste, dashing about and tumbling over everything in search of his powder-horn and shot-pouch, which were always mislaid, and moving the muzzle of his gun hither and thither in such a way as to place the lives of his men in constant and deadly peril. He started at last, with the speed of a hunted deer, and made a bold sweep into the woods in order to head the buffaloes. Here he squatted down behind a bush, to await their coming.

A short time sufficed to bring the stealthy hunters within range. Three shots were fired, and two animals fell to the ground; while a third staggered with difficulty after its companions, as they bounded through the woods towards the prairies, headed by the patriarchal bull of the herd. This majestic animal had a magnificently shaggy mane and a pair of wild glittering eyes, that would have struck terror into the stoutest heart; but Berry was short-sighted; moreover he had concealed himself behind a shrub, through which, as he afterwards remarked, he "could see nicely." No doubt of it; but the bush was such a scraggy and ill-conditioned shrub that the buffalo bull could see through it just as nicely, and charged, with a hideous bellow, at the unfortunate youth as it came up the hill. Berry prepared to receive him. For once he remembered to cock his piece; for once his aim was true, and he hit the huge animal on the forehead at a distance of ten yards; but he might as well have fired against the side of a house; the thick skull, covered with its dense matting of coarse hair, was thoroughly ball-proof. The bull still came on. Just at this moment another shot was fired, and the animal hurled forward in a complete somersault; the bush was crushed to atoms, and Berry was knocked head-over-heels to the ground, where he lay extended at full length beside his slaughtered foe.

"Ah! pauvre enfant," cried Antoine, running up and lifting Berry's head from the ground. "Is you hurt ver' moeh? Dat bull him break de ribs I'fraid."

Antoine's fears were groundless. In half an hour the youth was as well as ever, though somewhat shaken by the fall. The choicest morsels of the dead buffaloes were cut off by the men with an adroit celerity that was quite marvellous, and in a very short time the boats were again rapidly descending the stream.

The bivouac that night resounded with more vigorous mirth than usual. The camp fires blazed with unwonted power and brilliancy. The cook's office—no sinecure at any time—became a post of absolute slavery; for there was a glorious feast held beneath the spreading trees of the forest, and the bill of fare was "buffalo-steaks and marrowbones." But if the feast was noisy, the hours that succeeded it were steeped in profound silence. Each man, having smoked his pipe, selected for his couch the softest spot of ground he could find, and, wrapping himself in his blanket, laid him down to rest. The deep breathing of untroubledumber was the only sound that floated from the land and mingled with the rippling of the river; and not a hand or foot was moved until, at daybreak, the loud halloo of the guide aroused the sleepers to their daily toil.

A week or two passed, and we had left the lands of the buffalo far behind us, and were sailing over the broad bosom of Lake Winnipeg. It was calm and polished as a sheet of glass when we entered it, but it did not remain long thus. A breeze arose, the sails were hoisted, and away we went out into the wide ocean of fresh water. Lake Winnipeg is a veritable ocean. Its waves rival those of the salt sea in magnitude, and they break upon a shore composed in many places of sand and pebbles. If we sail straight out upon it, the shore behind us sinks in the horizon; but no opposite shore rises to view, and the unbroken circle of sky and

water is presented to our gaze, as it appears on the great ocean itself.

The wind rose almost to a gale as we careered over the billows, and the men had to keep up incessant baling. It was almost too much for us ; but no one murmured, for, had the wind been ahead, we might have been obliged to put ashore and remain there inactive for many days. As it was, we made a rapid run across the lake and entered the river, or rather the system of lakes and rivers, which convey its waters to the ocean. Hudson's Bay was our goal. To this point we were conveying our furs for shipment to England.

Many days passed, and we were still pushing onward towards the sea-coast ; but not so rapidly now. The character of the navigation had changed very considerably, and our progress was much slower. Now we were sweeping over a small lake, anon dashing down the course of a turbulent stream, and at other times dragging boats and cargoes over the land.

One afternoon we came to a part of the river which presented a very terrible appearance. As far as the eye could reach, the entire stream was a boiling turmoil of rocks and rapids, down which a boat could have gone with as much safety as it could have leaped over the Falls of Niagara. Our advance was most effectually stopped, as far as appearance went. But nothing checks the onward progress of a north-west *voyageur* except the want of food. The boats ran successively into a small bay, the men leaped out, the bales of furs were tossed upon the banks of the river, and the boats hauled up. Then every man produced a long leathern strap, with which he fastened a bale weighing upwards of 90 lbs. to his back ; above this he placed a bale of similar weight, and trotted off into the woods as lightly as if he had only been laden with two pillows. The second bale is placed above the first by a sleight-of-hand movement which is difficult to acquire. Poor Berry well nigh

broke his back several times in attempting this feat, and eventually gave it up in despair.

In an hour the packs were carried over the "portage," and deposited beside the still water at the foot of the rapids. Then the men returned for the boats. One was taken in hand at a time. The united crews seized the heavy craft with their strong hands, and shoved against it with their lusty shoulders; a merry song was struck up, and thus the boat was dragged through the forest for nearly a mile. The others quickly followed, and before evening all was carried over, and we were again rowing down stream.

Not long after this we came to a rapid, in the midst of which was a slight waterfall. The water was deep here, and the rocks not numerous, and it was the custom to run the boats down the rapids and over the fall, in order to save the labour of a portage. Three of the boats ran down in grand style, and reached the foot in safety. Berry and I were in the last boat. The steersman stood up in the stern with his hands resting on the long heavy sweep, while his gaze was directed anxiously towards the boiling flood into which we were just entering. The bowman, an immensely powerful man, stood up in front, with a long strong pole grasped in both hands, ready to fend off from the sunken rocks. The men sat in their places, with their oars ready for action.

"Now, boys, look out," cried the guide, as we plunged into the first billow of the rapids. The boat flew like an arrow straight towards a rock, which was crested with white as the water burst against its ragged front. To all appearance our doom was sealed. The bowman regarded it with a complacent smile, and stood quite motionless, merely casting a glance backward. The steersman acknowledged the glance with a nod; one long stroke of the great oar—the boat turned sharply aside, and swept past in safety. There was no danger in such a big blustering rock as that!

"Prenez garde!" cried the bowman, in a warning tone, pointing to a spot where lay a sunken rock. The steersman's quick hand turned the boat aside; but the bowman had to lend his aid, and the strong pole bent like a willow as he forced the boat's head away from the hidden danger. And now the fall appeared. It was not high, perhaps four feet, but there was a mighty gush of water there, and it was a bold leap for a heavy boat.

"Prenez garde, mes garçons—hurrah!—lads, give way!—well done!" The boat plunged almost bows under, but she rose again like a duck on the foaming water. The worst of it was past now; but there was still a ticklish bit below—a bend in the river, where the sunken rocks were numerous, and the surface of the water so white with foam, that it was difficult to detect the channel. The bowman's duty now became more arduous. With knitted brows and compressed lips he stood, every nerve and muscle strung for instant action. The steersman watched his movements with intense earnestness, in order to second them promptly. Ever and anon the stout pole was plunged into the flood, first on one side, then on the other; the two guides acted as if they had been one man, and the obedient craft sprang from surge to surge in safety. Suddenly the bowman uttered a loud shout, as the pole jammed between two rocks, and was wrenched from his grasp.

"Another! another! vite! vite!"

One of the crew thrust a fresh pole into his hand. Plunging it into the water, he exerted his giant strength with such violence as nearly to upset the boat, but it was too late. The planks crashed like an egg-shell as the boat dashed upon a rock, and the water began to rush in, while the stern was swept round, and the blade of the steering oar was smashed to atoms. Almost before we had time to think we were swept down, stern foremost, and floated safely into an eddy at the foot of the rapids. A few strokes of the oars brought us to the land; but, short although the interval was

between our striking the rock and running ashore, it was sufficient to half-fill the boat with water.

The danger was barely past, and the intense feeling of it was still strong upon my mind, yet these lighthearted *voyageurs* were jesting and laughing loudly as they tossed the packs of furs out of the water-logged boat; so little did they realize the imminence of the peril from which they had been delivered—the shortness of the step that had separated them from the immediate presence of God.

The remainder of that day was spent in drying the furs that had been wetted, and in repairing the damaged boat. Afterwards we continued our voyage, which, without further accident, terminated at length on the shores of Hudson's Bay.

ENCOUNTER WITH A WATER-SNAKE.

WHAT happy people we children of the United Kingdom ought to be, if we could only persuade ourselves of the fact, enjoying as we do every blessing that religion, civilization, and climate can afford! What though our winters may be severe, our Novembers foggy and chilly, our summer sunshine often usurped by rainy days, and the price of bread, meat, and fuel sometimes rather exorbitant; notwithstanding all these drawbacks, we ought, comparatively speaking, to consider ourselves happy. It is all very fine and poetical to read about cloudless eastern skies, shadowy palm-trees, murmuring rills, and so forth. These undoubtedly seem very inviting and charming, as viewed through the medium of gaily tinted pictures or books, the production of ready pens and prolific imaginations; but once substitute the reality for the imagery, and the fascination vanishes with uncomfortable rapidity. Apart from the thermometer at 90° in the shade, from monsoons with incessant three-weeks' torrents of

rain ; from land-winds, hot and unhealthy as the breath of a furnace ; setting aside heat, mosquitoes, green bugs, sandflies, insects, and vermin of all descriptions, including musk-rats, bandicoots, *et hoc genus omne*—I say, apart from all these nuisances of life in the East, from which we Britons are happily free, there are others even more startling and perilous, which are incidents of every-day occurrence.

Fancy, for instance, being obliged to shake your boots every time you put them on, under the expectation of a snake or a scorpion or a centipede tumbling out ; or being compelled to look under your pillow every night with a like dread. How would you relish moving your portmanteau (supposed to contain cherished papers, letters, portraits, and so forth), and finding, to your utter dismay, the bottom and the whole contents tumble out, one mass of dust, the destructive, speedy, yet quiet results of a colony of white ants, within the space of twenty-four hours ? We once knew a lady whose white satin shoes were utterly destroyed in one night. What would you say, or rather shout, to feel your body covered with swarms of large red ants, whose stings produce excruciating agony ? or to find your jams and jellies ruined by cockroaches ? your beer, in corked and sealed bottles, flat and disgusting, from the contact of musk-rats ? your nice aromatic cup of tea, a perfect flotilla of horrid insects ? or your candle extinguished by a bat ? I reckon that no Englishman, or, for that matter, any other European, would relish being exposed to such a catalogue of ills. Nevertheless, such are of daily, nay hourly occurrence in many parts of the vast continent of India ; and when we reflect on this, I think we have every cause to be thankful for our country and nationality.

But it is not only on land that we enjoy the advantage ; the rivers and seas, lakes and tanks of India abound with all kinds of reptiles and dangerous things. Leaving out sharks and alligators,

we may simply enumerate water-snakes, toads, frogs, leeches, etc. As for frogs, they are so abundant in some Indian tanks, that they constitute a nuisance of themselves during wet weather. Thousands of these unsightly reptiles keep up a clamorous concert, producing a sound similar to

“Take an egg—Kill a duck.”

repeated over and over again with a very nasal twang, which, commencing *adagio*, gradually rises to a very high pitch, the whole having a running bass accompaniment of bull-frogs. But these, though loathsome, are harmless: not so water-snakes, of which a great variety exist—such, at least, is my opinion, although water-snakes are sometimes supposed to be harmless. Possibly they possess various degrees of venom; but whether or not, I opine that few things can be more disagreeable than plunging into a pleasant cool stream on a very hot day, and finding yourself, after the first dive, face to face with a nasty venomous-looking snake, that forthwith sets up hissing like a goose.

On one occasion, a large water-snake introduced itself amongst a party of natives engaged in their morning ablutions, at the foot of one of the ghauts, in the Sone. A cry of alarm being raised, an idler on shore seized a *lutée* (large strong club) from a bystander, and, jumping into the stream, attacked the unwelcome intruder, who had no business to contaminate the waters bathed in by high-caste natives. The snake, nothing loth, encountered its assailant, and, angrily erecting its head in the air, made ready to give battle. In this interval, the greater number of bathers had betaken themselves to the shore, or scrambled up to the decks of the nearest budgerow, leaving the field clear to the two opponents. With protruded fangs the angry snake waved its head to and fro, watching for a favourable opportunity to strike at the man; but this opportunity never arrived. In the interval, the spectators looked on with breathless anxiety, although the issue of like combats inva-

riably terminated in favour of the biped aggressors. There was something terrible in the consciousness that one false step might expose the man to the deadly fangs of the serpent, and that a bite causing an aperture not much larger than what might be produced by the point of a needle, would result, if not in death, in intense suffering of longer or shorter duration. Moreover, the aggressor, besides being out of his own element, had to contend against a rapid stream, the effects of the late heavy falls of rain. Not long, however, were the lookers-on kept in suspense. The cudgel was seen flourishing in the sunlight, and then descended with lightning rapidity upon the back of the water-snake, which was crippled by having its back broken by the blow. Still the venomous creature managed to retreat towards the opposite bank, where the stream ran deeper and with greater velocity; but, with one hand cudgelling the snake and swimming with the other, the Indian followed up his advantage, amidst loud plaudits from the shore. For some few minutes both were lost to sight behind a projecting angle in the river; but almost immediately afterwards the man reappeared, holding the now dead reptile high up in the air. On bringing the snake to shore, it was found to be one of an ordinary species in those parts, measuring about seven feet in length, with a brown glossy back, very slightly marked, and white as milk underneath. All the people about these ghauts are expert swimmers. The only apparent inconvenience, therefore, experienced by the Indian was, that he seemed to be rather out of breath, as he flung the snake high upon the bank, laughing blithely the while at the success of his exploit. These and other varieties of snakes are very plentiful in the Jumna and other tributaries of the Ganges, though they are seldom to be encountered in the last-named river.

In the Bay of Bengal, the Straits of Malacca, and Gulf of Siam, water-snakes are more frequently to be met with than in any other portion of the globe: neither can any place compete with them for

variety in size and colour. On a fine day, with a gentle four-knot breeze blowing, we have witnessed upwards of twenty varieties of water-snakes swimming about the vessel, when off the coast of Sumatra. As seen in the water, with the sun shining upon their variegated and brilliant coats, they are beautiful to behold. That there are amongst them some of great size and strength, and some of deadly venom, we have no hesitation in asserting; in proof of which we may be permitted to introduce the following brief anecdotes, founded upon incontrovertible testimony.

In the year 1840, when the writer of this paper was sojourning at Bangkok, the floating capital of Siam, the following incident occurred. The weather had been for some weeks extremely tempestuous, and a very heavy fall of rain in the interior had caused the waters of the Menam to rise higher than usual. At that time our host, Mr. H., had commenced building a fine house on *terra firma*—the only one, with the exception of the king's palace and some missionary houses, to be met with in Bangkok, the rest of the population being compelled to content themselves with floating domiciles, erected upon bamboo rafts. Our dormitory was afloat, and here we had one evening assembled prior to retiring for the night.

Owing to the uncongenial state of the atmosphere out of doors, we had been subjected to the visits of many unwelcome intruders: rats and mice, and even birds, had sought shelter under our well-thatched roof; but heretofore we had been exempt from guests of a more dangerous character. It will be necessary to state that our floating home consisted of one sitting room, with a railed-in verandah overlooking the river, a large bedroom behind, and a smaller one on either side. There were three of us slept here every night; and, on the eventful occasion in question, we were retiring to our respective couches, when Captain M. suddenly started back from the door of his room, with well-timed presence of

mind closing the door after him. On inquiry he informed us, that just as he was about entering, his eye had been attracted by what at first appeared to be a large bit of rope coiled up on the floor: the noise of his footsteps, and the glare of the candle he carried in his hand, seemed to have aroused the slumberer; and to his horror he beheld a huge snake rapidly uncoiling itself.

This being the state of affairs, and as we could now distinctly hear the creature fumbling and tumbling about in its eagerness to escape, we deemed it most prudent to jump on shore, and rouse Mr. H.'s servants, who were sleeping in the warehouses that had been completed, under the new house then building. Speedily armed with guns and sticks, and lighted by flambeaux, we returned to investigate the nature of this nocturnal disturber, and administer speedy retribution; but we came too late. With the assistance of its powerful tail the snake had succeeded in dislodging a good stout plank, and so made its exit—a plank, too, that no ordinary man could have dislodged without a strong effort and a heavy mallet.

Thus much for their size and strength. That they are venomous the records of the royal navy too clearly indicate, when they tell under what tragical circumstances the doctor of her Majesty's sloop "Wolf" fell a victim to his taste for natural history; how, when the crew were washing the ship's decks in the Madras Roads, a water-snake chanced to be hauled up in a bucket, and, being incautiously handled by the doctor, inflicted a bite that occasioned his death within little more than an hour.

So, all things considered, we think the reader will admit that there is no country to be compared with our own dear native isle. At the same time, we have often admired the happy mental constitution of some of our fellow-creatures, which enables them to find pleasures in dangerous localities such as we have adverted to. Often, also, when we have heard our missionaries in the east record their perilous experiences, have we been struck with the gracious

and providential care which has so wonderfully preserved them, and kept them happy and peaceful in the midst of their useful but arduous labours.

A NIGHT ADVENTURE IN PARIS.

IT was during the first months of my residence in Paris, in the days of Charles the Tenth, and nearly five-and-thirty years ago. I had been to take a farewell dinner, and a temperate glass or two of Medoc, with a fellow-townsmen and neighbour of mine, who was on the point of returning to the paternal roof in Somersetshire. He had been studying medicine and the elements of practical chemistry for the last year, under the watchful eye of his uncle, a pharmacien in the Place Vendôme, and it was there, in the small sky-lighted back room behind the shop, which fronted Napoleon's triumphal column, that we had our modest symposium. I was loth to part with him, he had been so true a friend; he it was who crammed me with colloquial French—the popular idioms of the Parisian highways; who made me acquainted with all the ins and outs, the by-ways and the short cuts of old Lutetia, and taught me how to solve the difficult problem of cutting my coat according to my cloth, which in those days was unfortunately very scanty indeed.

It is not much to be wondered at that I forgot the lapse of time, and that, when at length I screwed myself up to the pitch of saying the last farewell, and had torn myself away, it should be verging towards the small hours of the morning. In truth, it was on the point of striking one when I left the house, and before I had well got clear of the broad "Place," the hour had struck.

At any other time I should not have cared a straw about this, but have walked on quietly to my lodging in the Rue Richelieu; but now I knew that would be of no use. That old concentrated

essence of verjuice, Ganache, the porter, to save himself a little trouble had detained my letters of a morning till I came down, instead of sending them by the *garçon* to my room on the fourth floor; and I had quarrelled with him in consequence, and given notice to quit at the end of my month. Since our quarrel he had used me savagely, and I knew he was no more likely to let me in after one o'clock than he was to pay my tailor's bill.

This reflection brought me to a stand-still. What should I do? Where should I go? To increase my chagrin it began to rain in a rather sharp shower. Instinctively I faced about, ran across the Place, and got under shelter of the piazzas in the Rue de Castiglione, just in time to save myself from a drenching torrent which burst on the streets like a waterspout. I was walking up and down in the dark, taking counsel of myself, until the storm should cease, when I stumbled and tripped over somebody lying crouched up at the foot of a pillar.

"Is that you, Janin?" said a rather whining voice, which seemed to proceed from some one in the act of waking from sleep.

"No," said I, "it isn't Janin: who are you? and why are you lying here at this time of night?"

"Un pauvre avengle!" said he; "I am waiting here for my comrade, who is gone to the spectacle. You see, M'sieu, Janin is fond of the spectacle, and while he is getting his fill of it, I take my pastime on the cold stones."

I thought it but a grim sort of joke, and told him I should think better of Janin if he were more considerate for his friend.

The poor blind wretch did not agree with me, and, to my surprise, began vindicating the character of Janin. "You see, M'sieu," he said, "if I am blind, Janin has good eyesight, and why should he not enjoy it? he may as well be blind as I, if he is to see nothing. One should not be selfish although one is unfortunate."

While he was speaking, and I was inwardly admiring his simple magnanimity, Janin came up at a quick pace, and chanting a lively ditty. "What, my old philosopher! so you have company," he said: "I am afraid I must disturb your conference."

"Make no apology for that, I pray," said I; "but if you can direct me to a lodging I shall feel obliged."

"You are English," said Janin; "there is an English house in the Rue de l'Odéon, which is always open till two. If you make for the Pont Neuf at once, and step out, you will be there in good time."

"Good night, then, my lads;" and away I trudged at a round pace for the Pont Neuf—crossed it in a pelting shower, and made the best of my way to the Rue de l'Odéon. I accounted myself fortunate in reaching the house a few minutes before the hour for closing the door, but found that I had not so much cause for congratulation as I had imagined, as the place was full, and the only accommodation the landlady could offer me was a small truckle bed in a two-bedded room, already bespoken for the night by a previous comer.

Being wet through by the rain, and feeling that I should not mend matters by faring further, I was fain to make a virtue of necessity, and accept the truckle bed. Moreover, wishing to get out of my damp garments as quickly as possible, I asked for my candle, and was forthwith shown to the dormitory, which I found was up four flights of stairs. I lost no time in getting between the sheets, but had no intention of going to sleep until I knew at least what sort of a subject was to be the companion of my slumbers. So I took a book from my pocket, and placing my candle on a chair by the bed-side, began to read, resolved to keep my light burning and myself awake until the sound of footsteps on the stairs should apprise me of the approach of the stranger. After the lapse of about half an hour the sounds I was listening for approached;

and then, clapping the extinguisher on the light, I lay back, half closed my eyes, and affected to sleep.

The figure that now entered the room was not at all a fascinating one, to my view at least. He was a man of about five-and-thirty, jauntily garbed in one of the pea-green, high-collared surtouts current among the fast men who affected the Luxembourg quarter of the Paris of that day, but which surtout, like the rest of his garments, seemed to have run all too suddenly to seed. There was something boozy and vicious in the expression of his face, which, spite of a fierce-looking moustache, gave one the idea of meanness and servility coupled with a reckless kind of bravado, which smacked rather of swagger than of daring; and in every feature there was the impress of debauchery and intemperance. He uttered a brief common-place greeting as he entered the room, but finding that I took no notice of it, probably concluded that I was asleep, and so said no more.

In less than five minutes he had bundled himself into bed and had put out the light, and after a few minutes more began to give audible tokens of the soundness of his slumbers. Though I had formed the worst opinion of my companion, I did not feel the slightest alarm. He evidently had no hostile purpose; he had no weapon of any kind, not even a stick, and I felt assured that in a personal encounter I could easily master him. Still, there was something in his wandering eye, which never rested for a moment on a single spot, that I did not like, and I felt a little annoyed with myself that I had not placed my garments nearer my hand, instead of spreading them on chairs in the middle of the room, in order to get them dry. These thoughts, however, were but momentary, and in a very brief space I had forgotten everything in a quiet slumber.

I suppose I may have slept about two hours, and the dawn was just breaking, when I was awoke by a slight noise like something

falling on the tiled floor of the apartment. Luckily I did not start or make the least movement, but, half opening my eyes, in the full consciousness of the situation, I saw that my companion was in the act of getting out of bed. His movements were so slow and cautious, and noiselessly made, that they roused my suspicion, and I watched him narrowly through my seemingly closed lids. With the stealthiness of a prowling cat he got upon his feet, and, with his eyes fixed on me, advanced slowly to the foot of my bed. His object plainly was to be sure that I slept; and I took care to betray no sign of wakefulness that might undeceive him. After a statue-like watch of a few moments, he seemed to have assured himself of my slumbers, and turning softly round, thrust his hand into one of the pockets of my pantaloons, and, withdrawing the contents, retreated to his bed, carrying the plunder with him. Here he lay motionless for several minutes, watching me attentively the while. At length he raised himself, and, drawing a canvas bag from beneath his pillow, deposited within it the booty he had seized, replaced it, and lay down as if to compose himself to sleep.

My blood was boiling in my veins at the fellow's impudent robbery, and I felt half inclined to rise and pummel him as he lay, and recover my property. There was no occasion, however, for any hurry; and, reflecting that second thoughts are sometimes best, I lay still, endeavouring to form some plan for doing myself justice, if it might be, without a scene of violence, which might be attended with unpleasant consequences, but fully determined to do battle for my own, if no other alternative presented itself. The contents of the pocket which the fellow had rifled amounted to about three pounds English, all in five-franc pieces, which I had received from my friend of the night before, in final discharge of an accommodation account between us. This was no great sum, to be sure, but it was more than I could then afford to lose; and

indeed, the idea of resigning it without a struggle was the last I should have thought of entertaining.

While puzzling my brains for some practicable expedient, which, however, did not present itself, I could not help admiring the calm placidity of the countenance of the villain who had robbed me, who, from his satisfied expression, seemed to be enjoying the consciousness of some good action; but in this I was much deceived. The rascal was no more asleep than I was. If my anxiety and indignation were perplexing me, his apprehensions were at the same moment troubling him; and just as I was abandoning all hope of concocting a plan for the recovery of my money without fighting for it, a movement on his part put me in possession of one which had at least the promise of success. I saw him open his eyes suddenly, and fix them full on me; then rising, he withdrew the canvas bag once more from beneath his pillow, and stepped out of bed with it in his hand. There stood upon the window-sill a withered geranium in a glazed earthenware pot—the plant was a mere stick, which had dried up and died for want of water. To my amazement the thief lifted the plant out of the pot by the stem, raising the earth in which it had grown, and which was all matted together by the roots, along with it; he then deposited the bag in the bottom of the pot, and, replacing the plant, got quietly into bed once more.

I saw at once that this move placed the result of the game very much in my own power, and I soon made up my mind how to act. I do not suppose that either of us went to sleep again; and I have often thought since, what a curious study we might have presented to any concealed spectator who should have been in the secret of our relative predicaments during the following two hours or so. I knew, of course, that my light-fingered friend would not think of rising till I was up and gone: having placed his booty where he might reasonably deem it beyond the possibility of discovery, he

was doubtless prepared to outface any suspicion or accusation that might be made against him, and therefore he would lie there until he had the field to himself. Accordingly, about seven o'clock I got up, deliberately washed and dressed, and, having finished my toilet, was almost ready to start, being well aware all the while that the fellow, who was feigning sleep, had his eyes upon me, and was watching for the moment when I should discover my loss. Of course I did not discover it; but when I had drawn on my boots, and was ready to go, I became suddenly aware that the atmosphere of the room was insufferably close, and began to puff and blow, and ejaculate interjectional complaints of the want of air; at the next moment I ran to the window, threw it wide with one hand, and leaning forward as if to catch the morning breeze, awkwardly swept off the flower-pot down into the little court seventy feet below.

In an instant the seeming sleeper was standing in his shirt on the middle of the floor, and demanding with an angry oath what I had done.

"Nothing," said I, "beyond breaking a flower-pot—the plant was withered and good for nothing. Excuse my awkwardness; I will indemnify the landlady. Good morning."

My nonchalance deceived the scoundrel, and he stood aside to let me pass, looking rather black, however, as I walked out. There seemed to be no one astir in the house save the *garçon*, who was roasting coffee at the open front door; and I was only made aware of him by the agreeable fumes which assailed my nostrils, as I sped like a greyhound down the stairs. In half a minute I was in the little back court, where lay the smashed remains of the pot and the withered flower. Feeling morally certain that the shock head and scowling visage of the thief were protruding from the window above, I drew the canvas bag from the crumbled dry mould, and held it up to his gaze. There he was, sure enough, growling and grinding his teeth with rage and mortification.

"Why don't you cry 'Stop thief?'" I bawled out to him. "Did you think to catch the Englishman asleep? Au revoir, coquin!"

I waited no reply, but making for the street, jumped into the first fiacre that came in view, and in half an hour had alighted at my own lodging. As I was mounting to my apartment, *au quatrieme*, I met on the stairs my friend and chum Ollendorf, who was sallying forth to meet his morning pupils.

"Halloo!" said he, "you've been out all night?"

"Yes," said I, "and I've had an adventure."

"Good! let me hear all about it."

I told him how I had passed the night, and all that had happened.

"Capital!" he cried; "and have you examined the thief's bag?"

"No, I have not done that yet; but of course it contains nothing but what is my own."

"Do not be too sure of that. Come, we will examine it together."

He followed me into my room, and I lugged forth the bag, feeling confident that the fertile imagination of my philological friend had misled him, as it was apt to do. To my astonishment there were in the bag, in addition to the money rifled from my pocket, a gold napoleon, a five-franc piece, and a pair of enormously large circular earrings of alloyed gold, such as one often sees in the ears of the provincial immigrants who crowd the wharves, the markets, and warehouses of Paris. "There!" said my friend, "you see that the rascal had more strings to his bow than you gave him credit for. If you had made an uproar and a charge of theft, he could have retorted the charge upon you—would have shown his own empty pockets, and might have stood as good a chance of criminating you as you of criminating him. However, you may forgive him, since he has paid you for the trouble of defeating his purpose; and really, I think he has treated you handsomely."

"Against his will; but, seriously, what ought I to do? Had I not better put the affair into the hands of the police?"

"Do you know the rule in such cases here? If not, I must tell you that if you put the thief's money into the hands of the police, you will also be compelled to hand over the whole contents of the bag; and how much of it you will get back, and *when* you will get any, you must be cleverer than I am if you can guess."

I finally decided not to trouble the police with the business; but as I could not have made use of the scoundrel's money, any more than I could have worn the huge earrings, I wrapped both up in paper together, and placed them in my pocket-book until time and circumstances should present some fit and proper mode of disposing of them.

It was about a year after the above adventure, and when the details of it had almost faded from my memory, that I was invited by a friend from England to accompany him on a visit to one of the Parisian prisons—if I recollect right it was the New Bicêtre, which, after a deal of solicitation and trouble, he had obtained permission to inspect. While we were wandering through the workshops, in which the prisoners labour together in silence for so many hours a day, as my friend was committing his notes to paper, I amused myself by scanning the demoralized physiognomies around me, little suspecting that I was destined to find an acquaintance among them. Close to my elbow there stood a man at a bench, bending over his work, which was that of carving sabots from unshapely blocks of willow wood. I was admiring the rapidity and boldness of his execution, when he suddenly lifted his head and exposed to view the face, which I had formerly studied with such deliberation, of the thief of the Rue de l'Odéon. I knew him at once, and saw that the recognition was mutual, for he lowered his head again instantly, and plainly sought to elude my gaze. I could not, of course, speak to him then, without contravening the rules of the prison; but on imparting my wish to do so to the

guide who had us in charge, he promised to give me the opportunity I sought, when we had finished our survey. He was as good as his word, and before leaving the prison I was conducted to the delinquent in his own cell, whither he had been remanded that I might see him. The poor wretch who, it was clear, imagined that I was going to lodge a fresh charge against him, seemed struck with a mortal paleness as I entered.

"Do not be alarmed," I said; "I have no complaint to make against you; but I have been wishing to meet you, and to make a restoration of property which may perhaps be of use to you." I unfolded my pocket-book and took out the little packet containing the napoleon, the five-franc piece, and the earrings. "These, I think, belong to you—is it not so?"

He bowed assent, but did not speak.

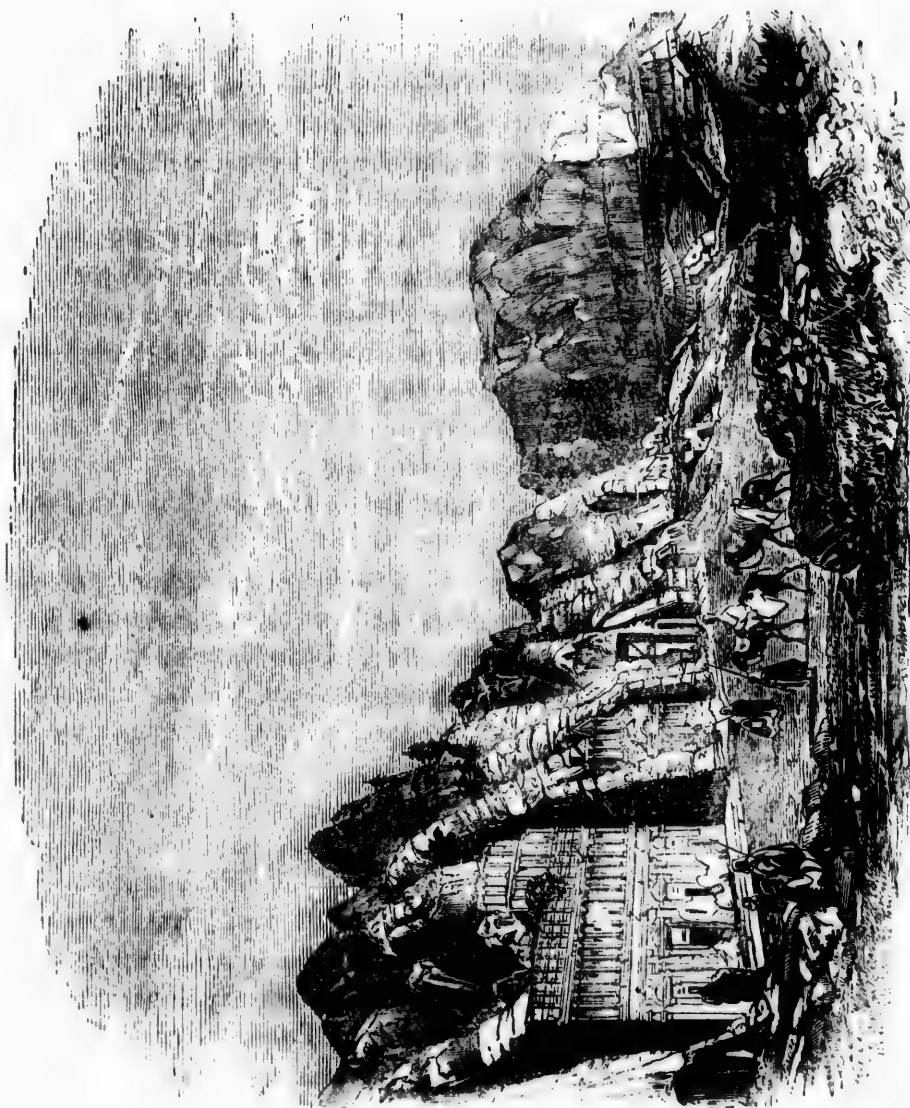
"Take them," I said, "and take better care of them than you did when you had them last."

He glanced at the attendant, as if to intimate that the man's presence prevented his saying more, and merely replied, with impressive earnestness, "M'sieu, you *are* a man of honour!"

I wished I could return the compliment.

AN ADVENTURE AT PETRA.

IN the early part of the spring of last year I had joined a party who proposed journeying from Cairo to Jerusalem by what is usually called the "long desert route," passing by Mount Sinai, Akabah, and the famous rock-hewn city of Petra. Our party consisted of nine Englishmen, one of whom was accompanied by his wife, and our dragoman. Mohammed Gezoni had formerly travelled over the same ground with the Rev. A. P. Stanley, whose recent



EXCAVATED ROCK TEMPLES OF PETRA.

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work on Sinai and Palestine has attracted so much attention. After spending several days amid the sublime scenery that encircles Horeb, the "mount of God," we travelled on to Akabah, at the head of the easternmost of the two arms of the Red Sea; and here we met with the first *contretemps* of our journey.

It is well known that Petra is in possession of a tribe of Bedouins, who are perhaps the most thievish and ruffianly of the Ishmaelite race. Indeed, the Fellaheen of Wady Mousa, as they are called, rely almost entirely for subsistence upon the sums which they are able to extort from passing travellers; and their outrageous demands and conduct towards the few who have penetrated into their fastnesses, have caused the majority of tourists to avoid Petra, as they would have avoided the highland glen of Rob Roy in the palmy days of that redoubtable freebooter. It was almost at the risk of their lives that Irby and Mangles visited this spot in 1818; Dr. Robinson was obliged to make a hasty retreat before he had explored half its wonders; and Burckhardt could only succeed in seeing it at all by assuming the disguise of a Mohammedan pilgrim. Latterly, however, the danger attending a visit to Petra seemed to have been much diminished. Sheikh Hussein, the powerful head of the Alouin tribe of Arabs, had made his power felt even by the lawless Fellaheen of Wady Mousa; and for some years past had been in the habit of escorting travellers through their territory, at the fixed rate of 1*l.* for each traveller; in return for which payment he guaranteed full protection both to life and property. We had left Cairo in the full expectation of securing this sheikh on those terms. Judge, then, of our disappointment on learning, when we arrived at Akabah, that Hussein was at a distance of eight days in the interior of the country, engaged in a war with a rival tribe, and possessed neither of leisure nor inclination to escort us to Petra. Our position was now rather a vexatious one. The Arabs who had accompanied us hitherto refused to go further with us, as their

tribe had an old feud with the Fellaheen of Wady Mousa; and it was as much as their lives were worth to venture into the territory of their implacable foes. Alone, it was of course impossible to proceed; and we had no course open to us but either to take another and very circuitous route to Palestine, entirely omitting Petra, or else to venture into that ancient capital of Idumea under the protection of another tribe of Arabs, the Tiyahas, whose sheikh, though on good terms with the Fellaheen, yet had no such control over them as had Sheikh Hussein. After some deliberation, we decided on the latter of these courses; and to the same conclusion came also three other parties, which we met at Akabah, and whose plans, like our own, had been deranged by the failure of our expected escort. Accordingly, our united caravan, now consisting of twenty-one Europeans—three of them ladies—set off, by the great Haj road, in the direction of Nahkl, a solitary fort in the desert of El Tih, and the head quarters of the tribe from which we hoped to obtain a guard to Petra.

We reached this place on the fourth day after leaving Akabah, and had to wait three days more whilst a sufficient number of camels were being collected for our further progress. Our new protectors from the first gave us to understand that they would have nothing to do with any difficulty which might arise between ourselves and the Fellaheen at Petra. They were willing to take us there, but refused to give any guarantee against extortion or violence. And seeing we could obtain their escort on no better terms, we were obliged to content ourselves with such as they offered. We were, however, encouraged by the thought that it was by no means impossible to get into Petra and out again without the Arabs knowing anything of our visit, till it was too late for the purposes of robbery. The Fellaheen do not live in Petra itself, but in a village two miles distant; and we flattered ourselves that by a little extra caution and expedition, we might altogether

escape a rencontre with these rapacious sons of the desert. How mistaken we were in our calculations will presently appear.

It took us five days to go from Nahkl to Mount Hor, the most conspicuous landmark in the western border of Edom. From this point a narrow and very difficult pass, of three hours in length, introduced us to the heart of the ancient Seir, a wild district of rock and glen, precipice and ravine, with here and there a little oasis of verdure, but, as a general rule, of a barren and savage aspect. It was late in the evening of Thursday, the 2nd of April, when we stood on a height overlooking the ruins of Petra, which filled a spacious valley of about a mile in length, with numerous offshoots running back in all directions among the mountains. Before we reached this spot, several of our party had taken the opportunity to ascend Mount Hor, the view from which was sublime in the extreme. The whole country appeared like a heaving sea, whose waves had suddenly been converted into stone.

The ground chosen for our encampment was a grassy plateau, about one hundred yards square, commanded on three sides by precipitous rocks, honeycombed with tombs and caverns, and on the fourth shelving steeply down into a wide valley, that was probably the principal street of the city in ancient times. The only means of exit was by the pass through which we had entered, which at this extremity was not more than six or eight feet wide, and was shut in on either side by tall and rugged cliffs. The process of pitching our tents was rendered somewhat longer than usual by the necessity we were under of searching for snakes, scorpions, and centipedes, some dozens of which were killed by the Arabs in a very short space of time. In other respects our situation was pleasant enough. It was dry and sheltered; the view over the ruins was exceedingly fine, and the ground was covered with shrubs, grass, and wild flowers, the first we had seen for many weary weeks of desert travel. But as a strategical position it was utterly worthless. We

were completely at the mercy of any one who held the heights around us, and could be picked off with perfect ease by marksmen concealed in the caves and behind the detached crags, without our catching even a glimpse of our assailants. And to attempt the passage of the defile by which we had entered, when the rocks on either side were held by enemies, would be but to provoke a repetition of the Khyber tragedy on a small scale. This, however, was the only good camping ground in the place.

We were rather surprised, on arriving at the spot above described, to find it occupied by a party of about twelve English and Americans, whom we had previously met at Cairo. They had arrived at Akabah a few days after we had quitted it, and had succeeded in finding an Alouin, of some weight with his tribe—Abouraschid, a relative of Sheikh Hussein's—who had undertaken to conduct them to Petra on terms similar to those on which we had agreed with the Tiyahas. Our friends had shown more foresight than we had: they had left their tents and baggage on the other side of Mount Hor, and had made, as it were, a flying incursion into the dangerous territory, bringing with them but the barest necessities of food and bedding, and one small tent for a lady who was in their party. The rest were contented to sleep in the tombs and caves dug in the rock. They had posted scouts in all directions, had their dromedaries secured in a ravine close by, and were ready to clear off at the first intimation of approaching danger. The wisdom of these precautions will be apparent in the sequel.

We, who had brought all our tents and equipage, encamped in the usual way, and our camels were soon widely dispersed in search of pasturage. The first night passed without any alarm. Not a hostile Bedouin was to be seen, and we began to augur favourably for the success of our expedition, and to joke our friends on their unnecessary caution and watchfulness. The night, indeed, proved so cold that they half regretted having left their tents behind, and

were glad to accept such accommodation as we could offer them in our temporary habitations.

At an early hour in the morning we were astir, and exploring the wonders of this ancient city. Roberts's beautiful lithographic views give a very good idea of the general appearance of the ruins, which consist of houses, temples, and tombs hewn out of the sandstone rock, which is here remarkable for the variety and richness of its tints, disposed in waving streaks and fantastic marble patterns, as peculiar and unique as they are magnificent. In a few square feet of rock you see light pink, deep crimson, all the intermediate shades of red, orange, saffron, purple, green, grey, and numerous other colours, disposed with more beauty of effect than was ever displayed by modern house decorator, and astonishing the beholder by the regularity and harmony with which they are blended. It is worth visiting Petra to admire this wonderful phenomenon of nature alone.

The façades of nearly all the excavations are enriched with fine sculpture and architectural ornaments. These are chiefly pilasters and cornices, carved doorways and windows, and balustraded terraces approached by staircases cut out of the solid rock. It is calculated that these rock dwellings would afford accommodation for a population of thirty thousand. The theatre, which, like the rest of the city, is hewn out of the natural rock, would seat an audience of five thousand. This ruin has one very peculiar feature. The cliffs that surround it, and also those facing it on the opposite side of the valley, are perforated with innumerable caves, the tombs of the former inhabitants of Petra. It is in fact the centre of an immense cemetery; and the thoughtless throng that crowded its benches must have always had before their eyes the solemn mementoes of their own mortality. How strongly would a thoughtful mind have been impressed by this juxtaposition of sepulchral scenes and the cruel and frivolous sports of the ancient amphitheatre! But it is

to be feared that the heathen multitudes who assembled here were wholly insensible to the serious reflections which might have been suggested by the strange spectacle around them.

Before I go any further in the account of my own visit to Petra, perhaps there are some of my readers who may wish to know a little about the history of that wonderful city.

CHAPTER II.

THE city of Petra is supposed to have been founded about the time of Abraham, for it was then that the Edomites first began to assume importance as a nation. It was taken by Amaziah, king of Judah, but did not remain long in his possession; and very soon afterwards the original inhabitants themselves, the Idumeans, were expelled by a new tribe from the south-east, the Nabathæans, who, from the account given of them by Diodorus Siculus, appear to have very much resembled the modern Bedouins in character and mode of life. Petra now became the capital of this people, who succeeded in maintaining their independence against numerous invaders, until the time of the Roman emperor Trajan, by whom they were finally subdued. Petra afterwards became a Christian city, and the see of an archbishop; but when the false prophet Mohammed began his career of conquest, this city was one of the first to submit to his arms. It is now completely deserted, and its present desolate condition furnishes a wonderful proof of the truth of prophecy. For instance, Isaiah predicted that "none shall pass through it for ever." And this is now undoubtedly the case, for Petra is the universally shunned of travellers; and though formerly the high road of commerce from the east to the west, its ravines now only occasionally resound with the hurried footsteps of a Bedouin, or a chance wayfarer. Indeed, the whole of the prophecy from which the above words are taken has been literally fulfilled;

and travellers who read its awful denunciations on the spots to which they refer, are constrained to acknowledge that not one jot or one tittle has failed of accomplishment. As Ezekiel says, "All who pass by her are astonished." I may add that the greater part of the ruins date from the later ages of the Roman empire, and though very magnificent and profusely adorned with sculpture, evince a debased and corrupt taste in architecture, very different to the noble ideas embodied in the temples and monuments of ancient Greece.

When we returned to breakfast, after the explorations described in the previous paper, we were disposed to exult in the freedom from trouble which we seemed likely to enjoy. Hitherto not an Arab had made his appearance; and already, in imagination, we were safe on the other side of the dreaded pass, congratulating ourselves on having outwitted the robbers who inhabit these fastnesses. With these feelings of false security we started again, about 10 A.M., to complete our researches in the valley. We first visited the Khuzneh, the most famous sight of Petra—a noble temple, or palace, with a richly-decorated façade cut out of a towering mass of rose-coloured sandstone. This façade is about a hundred feet high, and is surmounted by a colossal urn, which the Arabs imagine contains the "treasures of king Pharaoh." In the hope of gaining this treasure, they have fired so frequently at this urn, that its surface is now pitted with the dints of innumerable bullets. They have also tried to reach the coveted prize by cutting holes for the hands and feet in the smooth face of the precipice, but appear to have given up in despair at a height of some seventy-five feet. It is impossible, by words alone, to give an adequate idea of the noble appearance of this Khuzneh: a cry of admiration involuntarily escaped our lips as we caught the first glimpse of it on emerging from a fragrant thicket of oleanders, tamarisks, and wild fig-trees. We spent fully an hour in studying it from various points of view, and

anticipated with great interest a second visit on our return from the Sik, which we now proceeded to explore.

The Sik is a long winding ravine, of a width varying from 12 to 20 feet, and overhung by stupendous crags of a deep crimson hue, some of them rising to a height of nearly 250 feet. The sublimity of this defile is beyond conception, but it is also not devoid of a kind of beauty; for it is filled with dwarf trees and shrubs; delicate ferns and creepers hang from its walls of rock; and a clear cool brook runs amongst the stones in its bottom, forming here a pool, and there a mimic cataract, and then perhaps diving for a time from view beneath a mass of rock or an overhanging canopy of foliage and flowers.

We had proceeded for about a mile and a half up this ravine, and had just come in sight of a broken Roman arch that spans its further extremity, when, on turning a corner, we were struck dumb by the unexpected apparition of some twenty ruffianly looking Bedouins, armed with guns, swords, and clubs, and running to meet us with wild yells and wilder gestures. We were unarmed; but had we been otherwise, resistance would have been out of the question; for we could see and hear numbers of fresh assailants scrambling over the rocks in our direction, and we were presently surrounded and made prisoners by as ferocious and ragged a set of bandits as I ever wish to come in contact with. They forthwith made us turn back, and tumultuously hurried us in the direction of our camp, shouting and firing their long guns in the air, till the lofty precipices of the Sik re-echoed with a din almost sufficient to have split the solid rock. It was about noon when our researches among the ruins of Petra were brought to this sudden and unexpected termination.

Our friends, the party of twelve, must have received an early intimation of the approaching danger; for on our arrival at the camp, we found them mounted and on the point of moving off.

The Arabs were as yet hardly in sufficient force to prevent their departure, but they might have caused them considerable annoyance and even injury; therefore it was thought advisable to conciliate their forbearance by the payment of a sum of money, amounting to about ten pounds. The Arabs were the more ready to accept this, inasmuch as they felt that we were completely in their power, and, with all our tents and baggage, formed a far more valuable prey than our lightly equipped friends. Yet it was not in the Bedouin nature to strike the bargain without a long wrangle, and the scene which preceded the final settling was not at all calculated to reassure us as to the success of any efforts we might be disposed to make to reduce the demands of our unscrupulous captors. At last our friends departed without opposition; we gazing wistfully after them, and feeling that they could now afford to laugh at us with much more reason than we had laughed at them on the previous evening.

No sooner had they gone than the Arabs fell upon us with doubled importunity; and as their numbers augmented, so did their demands. Every half-hour brought in fresh reinforcements, and by about five in the afternoon there could not have been fewer than two hundred and fifty of these brigands gathered around our tents. Some of them seized the surrounding heights and the defile by which we hoped to escape, menacing us from thence with levelled guns. Others prowled about the tents, demanding gunpowder, food, money, and such of our personal property as took their fancy. But by far the greatest number crowded round our dragoman, in whose hands we had left the whole matter, simply commissioning him to get us off on the best terms he could. This, indeed, was our only course, for it would have been madness to have attempted force against enemies so superior in numbers and position. Whilst Mohammed was carrying on a stormy negotiation with the Arabs, we were allowed, under a strong

guard, to visit the Deir, another very fine monument of the ancient city.

On returning, we found our unwelcome visitors more insolent and exorbitant than ever in their demands, which amounted in the whole to upwards of a hundred pounds. They had already levied considerable contributions from the dragoman, in the shape of sugar, coffee, biscuit, etc.; and one of our party, refusing some gunpowder to an Arab who asked for it, had a knife put to his throat by the ill-favoured ruffian. The Fellaheen were now getting irritated by our resistance to their extortion; and when our dinner was about to be served, a number of them gathered tumultuously round the fires, and declared that not a dish should be removed until we had given them a full meal or an equivalent in money. Our whole stock of provisions would not have been enough for a third of their number; and as they pertinaciously insisted on their demand, we were at last obliged to pay them thirty dollars (about 6*l*.) for permission to eat our own dinners. As soon as they had received this, the earnest of a richer harvest which they hoped ere long to reap, they set up a shout of triumph, marched in disorderly procession round the camp, firing off their pieces in the air; and then, for the most part, dispersed among the neighbouring caverns and tombs, leaving, however, a guard of some sixty men to watch our movements, and see that we did not give them the slip in the dark. These desperadoes amused themselves during the night with firing over our tents, doubtless with the design of frightening us into surrender; and several bullets passed through the canvas that sheltered me and two of my companions.

We had taken care to collect our camels on the previous evening, and before daylight we began to strike our tents and pack our baggage. The guards offered no opposition to these proceedings, but they sent word of them to the rest of the band; and soon from every hole in the rocks around us issued troops of excited

Bedouins. It was a wild and striking sight presented by these children of Ishmael, as they clambered down from their resting places, and swarmed through the ravines, their garments streaming behind them, and the air resounding with their yells of defiance. Our poor dragoman was instantly beset by a furious throng, and we watched the conference with no little anxiety. Once or twice a rush was made to the rocks that encircled our camping ground, and then we fully expected that a volley was about to be poured in upon us; but, through the care of a watchful Providence, our adventure had no such tragical finale. In this we were more fortunate than a party of Americans, who three months previously had visited Petra, and, refusing to comply with the demands of the Fellaheen, had been fired upon from those very rocks with fatal result; for their cook was killed, and one of themselves dangerously wounded in the leg. The success of the Arabs on that occasion had probably emboldened them in their attack upon us; and, indeed, one of their number, a powerful, dark-looking fellow, repeatedly boasted that it was he who had shot the American cook, and that he was quite ready to serve our dragoman in the same way.

This dragoman really behaved admirably. Although menaced by half a dozen gun-barrels presented at his person, he kept his temper, laughed and joked with his captors, and exerted his utmost efforts on our behalf. At last he sent us word that we might move on, for he had satisfactorily arranged all matters. But his permission to depart was valueless, unendorsed by our watchful guards. No sooner did they perceive us advancing towards the edge of the plateau, than a crowd of volunteers scrambled over the rocks to join those who were already in possession of the pass; and as our leading camel entered the narrow gorge, half a dozen brawny savages leaped down before it, put their guns to the driver's breast, and effectually stopped our further progress, for the path was only

wide enough for one camel to pass at a time. At the same moment the Bedouins, perched on the cliffs around us, lighted their matches and levelled their guns at our heads, threatening us with a volley if we advanced another step. It seems that our dragoman had agreed to pay three hundred and ninety-three dollars as our ransom, but the Fellaheen insisted on twenty-seven more, and declared that unless all their demands were at once conceded, they would plunder our baggage and strip ourselves to the skin, killing any one who resisted; and, by way of showing that they were in earnest, they actually did seize two guns belonging to a gentleman in our party. Under these circumstances we had nothing to do but to submit, and so we reluctantly bade the dragoman pay down the sum of four hundred and twenty dollars, amounting, in English money, to 85*l*. No sooner was this done, than word was passed along the rocks to let us go free; our late guards blew out their matches, released the camel-driver, and, giving us a parting shout of triumph and derision, scampered back to their companions to claim a share of the spoil which their hostile attitude had been mainly instrumental in extorting from us. We, you may be sure, lost no time in availing ourselves of their permission to depart, nor did we breathe freely till we had once again placed Mount Hor between ourselves and the cut-throat thieves of Wady Mousa.

On reaching Jerusalem, a statement of this outrage was laid before the Turkish authorities; but though we met with plenty of official sympathy, it was as unproductive as the same commodity appears to be in places nearer home. Indeed, I should think any governor would find it too difficult a matter to chastise these Bedouins, entrenched as they are in the impenetrable fastnesses of Mount Seir.

In conclusion, I would advise all travellers contemplating a visit to Petra, to go under the protection of the recognised and powerful Sheikh Hussein, or not to go at all; but at the same time, I can

assure them that the wonderful monuments of this ancient city would well repay even such sacrifices and expense as we were at in our successful attempt to become acquainted with them.

AN ADVENTURE IN RUPERT'S LAND.

DEEP in the uninhabited wilds of North America, more than a thousand miles beyond the Canadas, there stands a solitary outpost of the Hudson's Bay Fur Company. It is a bleak, desolate looking part of Rupert's Land, so far removed from the haunts of civilized man that its inhabitants hear only twice a-year from their friends "at home." This outpost consists of four small log-houses, or huts, the doors and windows of which are of the smallest possible size and number. A rude stockade surrounds the whole, and an unpretending flagstaff rises in the midst. The trader in charge calls it the "fort," and the custom of the country bears him out in this misnomer. Perhaps the stockade and the flagstaff, acting on vivid imaginations, may have suggested the title. No guns frown from the ramparts of this wooden fortress of the north; no martial music echoes in the yard; and the garrison consists of the commandant, four men, an Indian hunter of the Chippewyan tribe, and one Indian woman.

All around the fort, from Labrador to the Pacific, from Canada to the Pole, is a wide wilderness, almost tenantless, and wrapped in the deep solitude with which it was invested at creation. A few scattered tribes of Indians there are, and wild beasts in plenty, but no symptoms of civilized man, save the wooden forts of the fur-traders, which are scattered over the country few and far between. In this region, winter reigns supreme for nearly eight months in the year. The keen winds of the north, fresh and bitter from the

ice-fields of the arctic seas, hold their revels here in exulting fury. Snow is the prominent feature in the scene. The land is wrapped in it; the housetops are weighed down by it; the branches of the surrounding pine-trees are laden with it, and heavy wreaths curl over and cling to the adjacent cliffs. It blocks up the windows, and fills the keyholes, and tips each individual post in the stockade with white. Everything large is covered with it and rounded in outline; everything small is buried, overwhelmed, obliterated with snow.

Truly it is a desolate spot, yet not so cheerless as description would lead one to suppose. Wherever man plants his foot, he finds that a benevolent God has provided for the comfort and happiness of his creatures. Even here it will be found that there are pleasures which cast a warm glow over the fur-trader's life and render desolation less dreary. The following incident, extracted at random from the outpost diary, shows that life at Stoney Creek is not without interest and amusement.

One bright and sparkling winter morning, George Wellwood, a sturdy Englishman of twenty-three, in the service of the fur-traders, and commandant at Stoney Creek, proceeded to equip himself for the chase—in those climates a necessary means of procuring subsistence. A deerskin coat, trousers of the same material, blue cloth leggings, mocassins, a fur cap, formed somewhat like a helmet, an ample shawl round his neck, and he was complete. Throwing his gun over his shoulder, he sallied forth towards the little hut in which his men lived.

"Hullo! Mike Lynch, are ye there?" he cried, stooping as he looked in at the low doorway.

"Ay, ay, yer honour; jist at your sarvice," answered a hearty Irish voice from within, as its owner drained a large bowl of tea and sprang to his feet.

"Get your gun and snow-shoes, Mike; we'll follow up the deer

track that was discovered yesterday. Tell the Squirrel to get ready to go with us, and don't forget your sled. I'll walk on."

In a few minutes George Wellwood was joined by Mike and an Indian, both of whom were tall of stature and stout of limb. The three proceeded at a rapid pace along the woodcutter's track, which was well beaten by the men in hauling firewood to the fort. In half-an-hour they reached the termination of the track, and the little hut of the woodcutters. Here they halted to put on their snow-shoes.

"They're mighty convenient things, to be sure, though rather troublesome at times," muttered Mike, as he endeavoured to force his large feet into the lines of his snow-shoes.

"You'd travel but a short way without them, Mike," said Wellwood: "the snow is five feet deep, if it's an inch; even *your* long legs would fail to find bottom."

The snow-shoes, of whose "convenience" the Irishman spoke, were most unwieldy implements to look at. Mike was a big heavy man, and was fond of coming out strong on all occasions—two facts which induced him to wear a headdress with a pair of horns, and to select the largest pair of snow-shoes at the establishment. They were fully six feet long by a foot and a half broad, and supported their burly wearer well on the surface of the snow, but proved rather troublesome at times among the thick bushes.

"Now then, Squirrel," said Wellwood, "do you strike off to the left and make a long circuit towards the blasted pine on the hill-top: you know the place. Mike and I will bear away to the right, and if we don't start the moose we'll meet you there."

Mike threw the line of his light sledge across his shoulder and followed his master into the forest. The country through which they passed was pretty level, and comparatively free from under-wood, so that they proceeded rapidly and with ease over the snowy waste. The air was perfectly calm, and the frost *intense*, causing

the breath, which issued like steam from the hunters' mouths, to congeal upon their hair and breast in the form of hoar-frost. Threading their way among the trees and bushes, and managing their cumbrous shoes in a way that proved them to be accomplished backwoodsmen, Wellwood and his man traversed many a mile of ground without seeing a single deer-track. Towards the afternoon they entered a more thickly wooded country, and turning to the left, round the base of a little knoll, they emerged upon a small stream whose waters had long ago been frozen to the bottom.

"Ha! Mike, we'll make use of the river here, and get a little relief from our snow-shoes."

"It's a road o' nature's own makin'," remarked Mike, disencumbering his feet, "an' a very purty one too; jist like a marble pavement."

In a few minutes they were striding over the hard coating of snow that lay upon the frozen stream.

While Wellwood and his companion were thus pursuing their way, the Indian pushed forward in a devious circuit towards the place of meeting at the blasted pine. For several hours he did not halt, or slacken the pace at which he had set out. Threading his way among the bushes with a rapidity and ease that showed he had been accustomed to tread the forest from infancy, turning swiftly aside when any obstacle presented itself, and insinuating the unwieldy snow-shoes through little openings in the underwood that seemed to bid defiance to his further progress, or treading down by main force the smaller bushes in his path, while his keen eye turned restlessly on all sides, noting every object in the way, the Squirrel travelled steadily until the sun was low, but discovered no fresh tracks of deer. Then, turning sharp to the right, he made for the place of rendezvous. Suddenly his eye was arrested by tracks in the snow: a glance sufficed to show that they were those

of an old moose and two young ones. Throwing his gun into the hollow of his left arm, the Squirrel proceeded more cautiously, following the tracks which led over the summit of a small eminence.

Ascending this, he was about to push down the opposite side, when he stopped short, and his eye glistened as he gazed before him, for down in the hollow beyond stood the objects of his desire—a magnificent moose, as large as a horse, with her two young ones beside her. The distance, however, was too great for a shot, and the Indian was endeavouring to approach nearer, when a little puff of white smoke burst from the bushes on his right. It was followed by a loud report; one of the young animals leapt its own height from the ground, and the next instant its life-blood dyed the snow, while the other two sprang up the bank, over the brow of the hill, and disappeared, followed by two well-intended, but ill-directed shots from George Wellwood and Mike Lynch, who dashed forward in pursuit.

So hot was Mike in the chase, that he totally forgot the sledge, which was bounding and tumbling behind him, until the line got twisted round his snow-shoes and brought him head foremost to the ground. Now, Mike's position was not enviable. He had come down with such a plunge that his head and shoulders, and indeed the greater part of his body, were buried in the snow, from which he struggled in vain for a long time to extricate himself; while his projecting feet and legs, the enormous snow-shoes, the tangled lines, and the overturned sledge, wriggled helplessly on the surface. Deep down did he plunge his hands, but no bottom could be found; the yielding snow offered no resistance to the thrusts of his arms as he endeavoured to raise himself, and the shoes to which his feet were attached prevented him from drawing his legs under him. At length, by dint of beating the snow hard in his violent struggles, he succeeded in gaining a sitting posture, in which he remained for

about five minutes, clearing the snow out of his eyes, neck, wrists, and hair, and growling all the while in an undertone at his misfortune.

Having gathered himself up, he buried the young deer to protect it from the wolves, picked up his gun, which was crammed to the muzzle with snow, and started off in pursuit of his companions. But they were far distant now, following hard upon the track of the deer. A stern-chase is proverbially a long one, and Mike Lynch found it so upon this occasion. The sun sank, and the shades of night soon covered the forest with the deepest gloom. A few shooting streaks of the aurora, however, played athwart the northern sky, serving to render darkness visible, and to light the lonely traveller on his way. The track of his comrades guided him, but hour after hour passed and still he failed to overtake them. At length, just as he was beginning to vent his impatience in grumbling, a bright flame sprang up before him, and a shower of sparks flew over the tree tops. In another minute the Irishman was seated before the blazing camp-fire, filling his very short and intensely black little pipe—a necessary indulgence in these regions—with tobacco, while his master quizzed him in regard to his performances as a tumbler, and the Squirrel prepared supper.

The second young moose had been overtaken and killed, and large steaks thereof were now roasting before the blaze. Mike's sledge was unpacked; a tin kettle was stuffed full of snow and placed on the fire, and tea was speedily produced.

It is a bright, cheery, beautiful, sparkling thing, a winter encampment in the snow. The camp fire was a blazing pile of logs, five feet long, three feet broad, and two feet deep. It was large enough to roast an ox whole, yet it was not more than sufficient to warm the atmosphere of the encampment. So intense was the frost that Mike Lynch, standing one foot distant from the glowing heap of logs, and smiling blandly at his short pipe as he strove to light it

without at the same time lighting the point of his nose, felt his back freezing while the front of his trousers was being singed. A spreading pine had been selected as a shelter for the night. From the foot of this the snow had been cleared by the hunters, who extemporized shovels out of their snow-shoes. The ground was laid bare for a space of fifteen feet in diameter. The sides of this hole formed walls six feet high, of the purest white. The fire was kindled at one end, the blankets of the party were spread out at the other, and the flat pine branches formed a thick impenetrable ceiling.

How that fire did roar, to be sure! The forked flames licked and curled round the thick logs with a glib and hungry ferocity that would have led one to suppose fire was a starved element in these cold regions, and seldom had the luck to grasp so large a meal. The smoke curled upwards in thick volumes, and vanished in the dark night. Then a lurid sheet of flame cleft the rolling mass asunder—another and another fork flew up, scattering the smoke right and left until the blaze obtained the mastery and turned the snow into sparkling silver, and everything else into deep red gold, while the sparks flew up in myriads, caught upon the branches overhead, and hung there like fireflies, or floated away into thick darkness. Viewed from a distance, the encampment looked like a bright and living jewel set in a great field of ebony.

"Now then, Mike, pass the tea, and don't eat too much, else we'll never be able to waken you. Two hours is all the sleep we can afford to take."

Mike groaned—being too deeply engaged with venison steaks to be able to reply—and handed the tin can of tea to his master. Wellwood drank the refreshing beverage from the *lid*. Mike and the Squirrel imbibed, alternately, from the can.

"Squirrel, are ye ready to turn in, avic?" inquired Mike, with a plethoric sigh.

The Indian, who indulged in the taciturnity of his race, gave forth a sound which might have meant anything, but for the accompanying nod, which proved it to be affirmative.

Mike sighed again; knocking the ashes out of his pipe, he constructed a pillow out of a pile of branches and lay down. The Indian stretched himself beside the Irishman, and spread a green blanket over himself and his comrade, tucked it tight in all round, under their feet and over their heads, and so they went to sleep like a long green bolster. George Wellwood followed their example. The neglected fire soon burned down, burst up once or twice in a fitful blaze, and finally went out, leaving the camp in total darkness and in profound silence.

The red man slumbered lightly. At the end of two hours he arose, roused his companions, and blew a last latent spark, that had survived the night, into a flame. Young Wellwood grumbled a little, as a matter of course, on rising, and was soon ready to renew the chase. A mouthful of cold tea and a bite of cold venison were speedily despatched, and, in ten minutes or so, the three hunters were gliding rapidly through the woods in silence, while the moon shed her soft light on their path and enabled them to follow the track of the moose deer. But the day had dawned, and they were beginning to think of breakfast, ere they overtook it. Wellwood was walking in advance, and was about to pass over the brow of a small hill, when his eye fell on the object of their hot pursuit. In a second, the report of his fowling-piece awoke the echoes; the whistling bullet sped to its mark, and the startled animal, bounding up the bank, disappeared over the top of a mound.

"Hurra! come on lads," shouted the excited sportsman, as he dashed forward in pursuit.

"Ye've missed it," growled Mike.

"The deer is hit," said the Indian, gravely, as he strode after his friends.

The Squirrel was right. On reaching the spot where the moose had been standing, blood was found on the snow, and in a quarter of an hour the animal was again overtaken. It was evidently much hurt, for it floundered heavily in the deep snow.

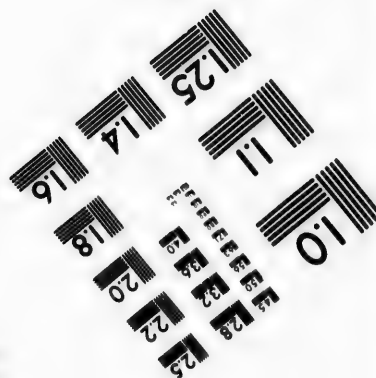
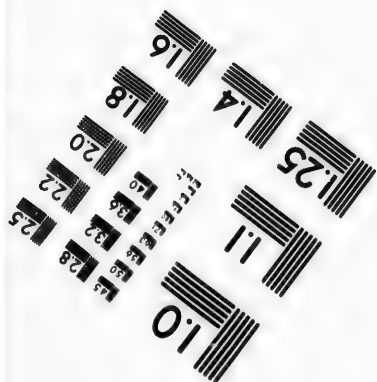
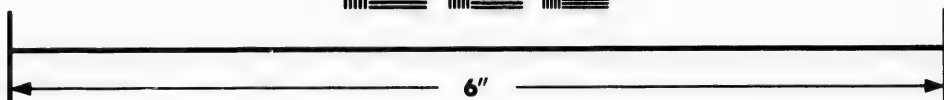
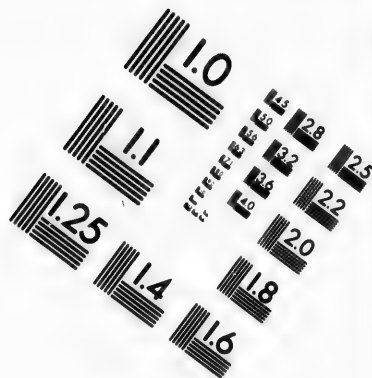
"Now then, Mike, be ready with a second shot," said Wellwood, raising his gun. Just as he pressed the trigger the moose stumbled and disappeared, while a cloud of white snow flew up into the air. Lowering his piece, and uttering an exclamation of surprise, he hurried forward. Suddenly he halted, and Mike observed that he was gazing with a look of horror at something before him. Mike was about to advance, but he stopped abruptly, and his blood curdled in his veins on observing that his young master was standing on a snow-wreath that curled over the brink of a precipice several hundred feet deep. He was beyond the edge of the cliff, and the tenacity of the snow alone preserved him from instant destruction.

The uncertain morning light caused the snow-plain beneath to appear on the same level with that above, so that the deer had been deceived, and its mangled remains now lay scattered on the rocks far below. Wellwood had almost shared its fate. His position was one of extreme peril. To retreat backwards was impossible, owing to the form of his snow-shoes. To turn was almost equally impossible, for the exertion necessary to do so would in all probability break off the wreath and hurl him into the yawning abyss.

"Och, master dear, jump back and kitch me hand," cried Mike, in a hoarse whisper, advancing cautiously.

Wellwood drew a long breath, made a desperate backward bound, and fell upon the snow as he grasped the outstretched hand of Mike. The effort broke off the mass of snow, which went thundering down the precipice. So narrow was the escape, that Wellwood rested upon the extreme edge of the cliff, and one of his





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snow-shoes dangled over it ; but a tremendous pull from the stout Irishman placed him the next moment in safety.

With a deep and earnest voice the young man thanked God for his deliverance, as he pressed the hand of his faithful servant. Then the three hunters turned to retrace their steps. The two young deer were picked up by the way, and the shattered body of the old one was left to the arctic foxes and wolves that prowl around the lonely outpost of Stoney Creek.

BENIGHTED ON SALISBURY PLAIN.

It was towards the close of the summer season a good many years ago. I had started from my home in the weary world-working city, on a combined ruralizing and sketching expedition, and taken up my abode for some days at a farming village lying at no great distance from the declivitous ridge which terminates Salisbury Plain at its southern limit. The neighbourhood of a barren moor, a wide heathy waste, with patches of furze or wild thyme, or uncultivated land of any description, had always more charms for me, as containing more of the elements of the picturesque in landscape, than those highly cultivated regions where "every rood of ground maintains its man," and the rich soil, trimmed like a garden and bright with the golden grain, keeps the word of promise to the husbandman. It is on the debatable land, between the wilderness and the fruitful field, that the artist loves to wander, and to gather from either, as the mood of the moment may impel him, or from a combination of both, those transcripts from the face of ever-changing nature the successful delineations of which make up the events and epochs of his existence.

But my trip was rather a holiday than a professional excursion.

I sought recreation rather than employment, and feeling the necessity of repose after a period of intense labour pursued in spite of a prostrating nervous affection, which at intervals laid me on the shelf—I had resolved to unbend myself as much as possible, and to work no more than just enough to give that flavour to repose which makes it a luxury. But such resolves are sometimes easier made than adhered to; and no man who has ever so little of the love of nature in him, and the ability ever so humble of perpetuating some of her variable phases, need calculate upon remaining doggedly inactive while the cloud-shadows dapple the outstretched weald, the blue smoke curls up through masses of dense foliage, the brooks run riotously cascading between their precipitous banks, or the distant hills loom grey and transparent through the haze of sunshine, or deepen to indigo darkness beneath the gathering storm—and he looking on. So it came to pass that I had worked enthusiastically instead of being superlatively indolent, and had filled my portfolio with sketches, my note-book with memorandums, and my head with ideas—reaping at the same time, at least so I flattered myself, all the benefits I had anticipated from the change of air and employment.

One afternoon, when the gorgeous rain-clouds had eclipsed the cirri which for some days had held possession of the upper sky, and, piled up from the horizon to the zenith, showed like the work of Titan architects, in layers of massive blocks molten and fervid with dazzling flame-light, I sallied forth, after an early and slight refectation, armed with camp stool, walking stick, portfolio, and water colours, to the high table land of the interminable plain. It is only in such a situation, where the sky comes down upon the earth without any intervening objects upon the edge of the horizon to break the line of contact, that one can get the best view of cloudland in its integrity; and a view on a broad level down, inland, such as Copley Fielding has painted perhaps a thousand

times, is very different from one under a marine sky, where the character of the clouds is less marked and striking, even if a hazy wall of exhalation does not obscure their apparent junction with the waters. From time to time I pitched my stool, and did my best to wash in some of the characteristic sky-pictures which filled me with admiration. Such essays were necessarily very brief, from the constant change in the masses which were the subject of study; and after each trial I walked forward to vary the scene on the horizon line, and not without a hope that a distant view of Stonehenge, of the locality of which I was ignorant, might appear and be brought into a sketch.

As the day grew older and the sun declined, the character of the clouds altered wondrously. The white gleaming masses deepened into an ominous purple, and beneath some of them, towards the west, long streaming bars of fiery crimson, alternated with strips of vivid emerald green, made a new and more attractive spectacle, which brought me again to a stand-still. I may have sat an hour or more in the attempt to fix upon paper, not so much the actual appearance, but the ideas which this magnificent contrast of colour originated in my mind. I was not aware, until I had done nearly all that it was in my power to do towards that object, that the night was rapidly approaching; nor, if I had been, should I have felt the least uneasiness on that score, it not having entered my head for a moment that there could be any difficulty in finding my way home again. When I rose, however, and looked around, the dreary, dark aspect of that side of the heavens to which my back had been turned so long thrilled me with a sensation the reverse of pleasant; and, making what haste I could in packing up my materials, I resolved to compensate by smart walking for the delay, and to lose no time in retracing my steps. But, already, I was not exactly certain of the direction in which I had come, having neglected, in settling my point of view, to note any particular object, such as a

stone or hillock, that might have served instead of a directing post. Still I knew that, by proceeding south, I must come, in a couple of hours or so, to some part of the ridge whence I could easily ascertain my exact position; and no fears, only a slight mortification, as the vision of the tea table at the farmhouse rose to my imagination, crossed my mind. I was obliged to stand still for a few minutes, because I had been sitting cross-legged, and the leg which had served for an easel had "the pins and needles," and would not allow me to move. While I thus stood waiting permission to start, a few drops of rain came thumping like bullets upon my portfolio, and they proved to be the heralds of a storm which was not long in approaching, and which poured its unrelenting fury upon my unsheltered head.

It grew dark apace: there was still, however, a long blood-red line visible in the west; and, noting the spot where I supposed the sun had gone down, and calculating that, it being now the middle of August, he had set two or three points north of due west, I turned my face resolutely towards the south, and having buttoned up to the chin, and recovered the use of my limb, pushed forward as fast as I was able.

Salisbury Plain, as many of my readers are quite aware, is anything but a plain, in the plain sense of that word. What it may appear as a whole, when viewed from a balloon, I don't pretend to say; but that part which was the scene of my erratic exploit was a succession of wavy ridges, hills, and hollows, with now a terrace of table land, and now a valley of corresponding extent. This variation in the surface rendered it extremely difficult for me to persevere correctly in the track I had to take. Upon arriving at the summit of one of the ridges, after traversing its subjacent hollow, I had always to correct some small deviation that I had made from the straight route. As long as any colouring remained in the sky where the sun had gone down, this correction was easy

enough ; but by-and-by, when the rain rushed down like a universal waterspout, the gloom grew deeper ; the red light vanished ; and on all sides alike a wall of descending water through which the sight could not penetrate for a hundred yards, seemed to shut me in, and impressed me with the notion that I might have been the sole living being left in a world devoted to a second deluge, every other thought being absorbed in the fearful tempest that was rattling about my ears.

I knew now, well enough, that I did *not* know in what direction I was going, and I was fast becoming nervously and painfully excited. Still I pushed on all the faster, unwilling to believe that I had lost my way and was wandering at the direction of chance. Resolving not to think of disaster, lest such thoughts should give rise to apprehension, I called to mind all the pleasantest things that had happened to me in my whole life ; and, like the rustic in the churchyard, who is described as "whistling aloud to keep his courage up," banished for a time the sense of present calamity by that of past joys. But now I began to feel overpowered with fatigue, and, in spite of the heavy rain, parched with thirst. I was wet through to the skin, but yet my mouth and tongue were dry as sand paper ; and when I rubbed the latter against my palate, I heard a grating sound like the croaking of a frog. I sat myself down upon a large stone of some tons weight, and drank up the rain-water which had collected in the hollows of its surface, and which, in the fast-falling storm, were refilled as fast as I drained them. The draught refreshed me ; and though it quenched my thirst, it did not and would not moisten my mouth for more than a moment.

Suddenly, as I sat staring dreamily into the haze of watery shafts that shot furiously into the ground, I heard the heavy squashy thump of a horse's feet approaching ; and a moment after the magnified apparition of a powerful white horse, urged to full and desperate

gallop by a brawny yeoman, who at every leap dug the rowels into his side, burst into view. Instinctively I ran to intercept the horseman, and, shouting with all my force, endeavoured to bar his way. The rider, however, never drew rein, and had not the horse swerved from his direct path, I should have been borne down and, perhaps, slain upon the spot. As it was, the fellow struck at me savagely with the butt end of his heavy whip. I felt the whiff and wind of the blow, which would have dashed out my brains had it taken effect; but ere I could look round to remonstrate, both horse and rider had vanished behind the deluging curtain. I saw at once how it was. The horseman was a farmer who had deserted the turnpike road for the sake of a short cut through the storm: he had taken me for a robber, and would probably regale his neighbours with the narrative of his valour and lucky escape.

I returned to my stone, and sat resting there for a quarter of an hour, steaming the while with perspiration, and beginning to despond with anxiety. Ere I rose, a few vivid flashes or rather sheets of lightning, followed by distant peals of thunder, lighted up the scene. I took the momentary opportunity they afforded to look around. I saw in the distance some mounds which I had not remarked before, and I knew by this that I had wandered far from the homeward route. The consciousness of that fact staggered me, and I knew not what to do. Warned by a cold shivering of my whole flesh, I rose to go—but where? That was the question. I walked forward listlessly, to keep in motion at any rate, if I could do nothing else. I left my portfolio, the covers of which were reduced almost to a pulp, on the stone which had been my resting place, together with my water-colours, the rattling of which as they swung in their tin case in my pocket annoyed me. The rain now abated considerably, and the sky grew lighter; but now a new phenomenon alarmed me. As I peered upon the sodden ground, in the forlorn hope of discovering some beaten track, however faint,

which might lead to some dwelling, I saw that the grass which to my near view should have been green, was of a bright blood colour; when I looked a few paces forward it was not so; but, under my feet, and for a yard or so around me, it was of a gory red. I walked in the centre of a bloody disc, and couldn't get out of it. "I am not superstitious," I said to myself, "yet what can this mean?" and for some minutes I would look at the ground no more. Yet I could not refrain long from looking—and now, behold! the dim circle in the midst of which I walked was of a pale violet colour; the bloody colour was gone. I liked that better, or, to speak more correctly, I disliked it less than the gory hue. After another interval I looked down again, and the disc was of a brilliant saffron; and then while I gazed, came one of crimson, which again deepened into the hue of blood. Then I thought, "Am I about to lose my senses?" and that terrible apprehension almost overcame me.

What could I do? Proceed in what direction I would, I was as likely to go wrong as right. The rain had well nigh ceased: perhaps it would soon cease entirely. Why should I be alarmed? After all it was but playing the part of a picket in a wet night, without rations. I would stay where I was, moving about a little to keep off the cold, and wait for the dawn of morning, or the glimmering of some star which, by revealing its position, should put me in possession of mine. I pitched my camp-stool and sat down; then I rose again, and marked off a walk of a dozen paces, and marched up and down it leisurely for above an hour. This calmed my nervous excitement, and put to flight the changing circles of colour in which I had lately walked. The wind arose, and blew strongly soon after midnight, and I began anxiously to watch its effects upon the clouds above. It was a long while before a star appeared, and when one glimmered forth at length, it was a stranger to me; another and another, and still I was none

the wiser. At last several were unveiled at once, which I recognised as belonging to a known constellation: then I knew where the north star should be, and, consequently, in what direction I had to go. I set forward at once, and had the satisfaction as I proceeded to see the clouds scurry off, and the stars shine forth in all their beauty. I repassed the stone upon which I had rested, and being now in better spirits, and feeling that the worst was past, recovered my property.

I walked on with an energy that surprised me, for two full hours, without recognising any object, yet perfectly confident that I was on the right track. I had not my watch with me, but I imagined that it could not be far from dawn, when I found myself in the company of a few straggling sheep. "Can these sheep be here without a shepherd?" I asked myself; and at the thought I immediately shouted with all my might.

The cry was answered by the barking of a dog, which I was glad enough to hear. As I continued shouting, and the dog redoubled his noise, the uproar we made soon aroused the shepherd from his sleep. At first it appeared as though the man had arisen out of the ground, as there was nothing like a human habitation in sight. He came forward enveloped in a coarse frieze coat, and carrying a small lantern in his hand. This he held up to my face, while with the other hand he grasped what should have been a pastoral crook, but was an undeniable oaken cudgel of skull-splitting capacity. He examined me from head to foot with the utmost deliberation and *nonchalance*, while his white hair fluttered in the wind. Apparently satisfied with his scrutiny, he lowered the lantern, and said:—

"You've a bin to zee th' stwons, an' ha' loozed yer wa'—beant et?"

"I have lost my way," I said, "and am tired, and wet, and hungry to boot."

"Can'st ya zum burd an' byeak'n ef s'like," he said, "an' a zwig o' zider."

I expressed my gratitude, and he bade me "coom awa'" and led the way towards his shealing.

This was a sort of hole in the southern side of a rather steep ridge overlooking one of the low hollows I have already mentioned. Viewed from the exterior it looked like a heap of dried sods hardly larger than an average haycock, and might have been passed, even in the daytime, without being recognised as a human residence; but when you were once within it, it was a snug little berth enough, warm, wind-tight, and weather-proof, with a good dry bed on the stone-walled side, an old broad-bottomed chair, and a fire smouldering in a corner beneath a chimney that burrowed through the earth. Only one wall was of stone, and that uncemented; the others were formed of rough planks. Around them hung a few bottles and pots of what I supposed were sheep medicines, a dredging horn, an old horse pistol and powder flask, and a huge jaci fe. On the table lay a big brown loaf, and from some, to me, undiscoverable recess, the shepherd produced a lump of fat bacon. He also reached down a drinking horn, and pouring cider from a small harvest keg, gave it me to drink. Sour as it was, it ran like nectar down my parched throat. Putting the huge knife into my hand, he pointed to the viands, and bade me help myself. The bacon, however, was uncooked, and I could not touch it. The old man laughed at my fastidiousness, and said he always ate it raw himself. While I made a supper of the brown bread and cider, he blew up the smouldering embers of the fire, and volunteered to dry my garments if I would occupy his bed the while. I did not suffer him to repeat the proposition, but tumbled into the warm nest in double quick time, and in a few minutes was sound asleep.

When I awoke the sun had been three or four hours up, and

was shining brilliantly. I was alone ; but the shepherd had dried my clothes famously, and I could now resume them with comfort. In a few minutes I joined him in the hollow, where, with the aid of his dog, who brought the patients to him as he wanted them, he was busy in applying medicaments to some of his flock who stood in need of such service. He volunteered to guide me so far on my homeward route as to render further mistakes impossible, and did so, leaving his dog in charge of the flock. I got home in time for farmer Burton's dinner, and greatly relieved the mind of my host and hostess by my appearance.

When, in the following year, I went to a sheep-hearing in the same village, I met my friend the shepherd at the celebration of that annual festivity. Though past fourscore, the man was quite a child in worldly experience, and retained the childish faculty of being amused with the veriest trifles. I found that my story had gone the round of the neighbourhood, not without such additions of the marvellous as people who have but little food for thought are prone to append to their narratives. I am afraid my second appearance dissipated some of these wonders : it certainly extinguished a very dramatic account of a struggle with a highwayman, which was got up by the apparition on the white horse ; but, nevertheless, it conferred a real pleasure upon the solitary of the plain, who assured me that he had taken care to provide himself with the means of boiling me a rasher whenever I should honour him with a second visit.

A LEAF FROM A CLERGYMAN'S JOURNAL.

THE Christian minister is frequently dejected when he reflects upon the few visible signs of success which sometimes attend his ministry of the word. He may labour with unremitting diligence, be instant in season and out of season; yet, to the end that his faith and patience may be tried, he may not be permitted to have any outward proof that God is making him instrumental in turning souls from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. But if on this account we relax in our efforts to do good, and fail to improve every season of doing good which presents itself, we may let slip the very opportunity by which the Almighty intended to make known to us that we were not labouring in vain nor spending our strength for nought. For oftentimes after a season of long apparent dearth and darkness, and just perhaps as we had begun to give up hope, the wilderness suddenly appears to blossom as the rose, and the desert becomes fruitful as the garden of the Lord. By some remarkable instance, it may be, it is made plain to the patient labourer in his Master's vineyard, that God is with him establishing the work of his hands. And this revelation of the Master's presence with him is, to the Christian labourer, what a friendly light in the distance is to a traveller, journeying amidst the darkness of the night through a wild and lonesome country: he sees the light and takes courage, and feelings of doubt and despair disperse, even as the gloomy night clouds vanish under the beams of the rising sun.

Thus was I encouraged in the young days of my ministerial life. In weak health and in depressed spirits, I had been labouring, apparently without any success, for a lengthened period. No words of mine seemed strong enough to turn back the swollen tide of

wickedness which, like a torrent, rolled down the streets of our town, and I was beginning to despair of ever doing a work for God in such a place; when I was requested to occupy a pulpit in a neighbouring city for a single sabbath evening. Somewhat unwillingly, I consented to do so, for I was just then meditating a retreat from the ministry altogether, thinking it not impossible that I had mistaken my vocation in life.

When the sabbath evening came round that was to find me preaching at D——, I well remember debating with myself long and anxiously whether I should go or not. It was a dull November evening; I had more than four miles to walk, and a cold drizzling rain was falling. More than once I determined to send some one else to fill my place; but while thus in doubt as to what I should do, the words sounded in my years, clearly and solemnly, as if a spirit had spoken them: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." I hesitated no longer; but breathing a prayer for help and utterance, I set forth for D——.

When I arrived at the scene of my evening's labour, I found but a very small congregation assembled: the place of worship was filled with a cold raw fog, through which a few tallow candles faintly glimmered. The atmosphere was damp and unhealthy as that of a vault, and seemed to strike every one who entered with a perceptible chill. Throwing myself, however, upon the promised aid of the Holy Spirit, I began to speak to the people the word of life. Taking for my text the glorious words, "There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," I endeavoured to illustrate and to enforce the following truths—that man as a sinner was under condemnation; that this condemnation was of a most fearful character, and involved in it the most terrible results; that man by himself was wholly unable to escape from this condemna-

tion and its consequences ; but that God, in the gospel of his Son, had met humanity in its low estate, had provided a means of escape from the terrors of a broken law, and from the accusings of a guilty conscience ; that he had established in the world a grand foundation for the sinner's hope, and was well pleased with him who, casting himself upon this foundation, was desirous of being saved according to the Divine method.

While I was proceeding with my address, my attention was forcibly arrested by the appearance of a poor lad, who was standing or rather crouching in the aisle near the door. He was shivering with cold, and occasionally, as the wind howled past the windows in fitful gusts, he would draw his tattered garments closer round him to protect his emaciated, sickly looking frame. He seemed afraid to meet the eye of any one, for once when he found my gaze fixed upon him, he immediately cowered, dropped his head upon his bosom, and did not look up again for some moments. How it was that I began to lose all thought of the congregation, and to speak as if that poor boy were my only auditor, I know not, but so it was : like a magnet he drew my thoughts and feelings towards himself, and I found myself speaking more emphatically to him than to any one else. I forgot the cold, dull place of worship in which I was preaching ; and even while I was speaking, my heart earnestly prayed to God to bless the words to the salvation of that wretched outcast. New thoughts and illustrations came into my mind, and God seemed speaking through me, more especially to him who had so forcibly awakened my sympathies. He looked so poor, so miserable, and withal so desirous of having a word of kindness spoken to him, that at the close of the service I determined to send for him ; but on looking to the place he had occupied during worship, I found it vacant : the boy had gone. No one, it appeared, had observed him but myself ; and all the way home my fancy followed the unknown, apparently friendless lad, wandering

in his tattered garments, through the wind and rain of a November night, without a home to which to direct his wearied steps.

I cannot explain the cause, but I inwardly felt that night, that I had been made instrumental in doing good. I was as certain of it as if the fact had been announced to me by a messenger from the skies; and I returned to my own field of labour rebuked for my want of faith, and resolved to work more zealously, and to exercise more implicit trust in God. So vivid was the impression which the service at D—— made upon my mind, that I even used to dream about it; and always, as the central figure in the dream, was the poor boy who had so deeply interested and affected me. Again I could see him, standing cold and solitary in the aisle, the very image of want and sorrow; and I would sometimes awake with words of sympathy intended for him upon my lips. On several occasions, I made inquiries with regard to him of persons who were likely to meet such as he, but always without success; and yet the thought would often occur to me that he and I were destined to meet. We *did* meet, and under circumstances never, never to be forgotten by myself.

It was the middle of winter, and the snow was lying deep on the earth; when one evening as I was reading in my study, I was told that a very poor woman wished to speak to me. "She would not come in," the servant said, but would be very thankful if I could allow her to ask me a question at the door. Upon going to the door, a most pitiable object met my view. Prostrate upon the steps, her forehead touching the cold stones, lay the poor woman; she was very thinly clad, and seemed almost frozen by the severity of the winter air. At the sound of my voice, she started and made a languid attempt to rise, but her strength failed her; and shivering with cold she sank down again into a kneeling posture, looking at me with a mute prayer for compassion and succour. With the assistance of my servant, I carried her in almost a fainting state.

into the kitchen, and for a time she remained without power to utter a single word; but gradually she recovered through the restoratives we employed, and accepted very gratefully some food that was set before her. She had not, however, eaten above a mouthful or two, before she suddenly recollected the object of her errand: she burst into tears, and exclaimed, in a voice broken by emotion, "I didn't come here to beg, sir, indeed I didn't." There was that in her very wretchedness, and in the large tears which coursed down her cheeks, which forbade even the thought of her being an impostor; and in as kind words as I could use I expressed my willingness to serve her. She paused for a moment, struggled with herself to obtain the mastery over the feelings which were agitating her, and then, in more quiet tones, gave me the following account of herself.

She was a widow, having lost her husband above five years ago: she had seen better days, for, while her husband was alive, she, together with her son, her only child, was enabled to subsist very comfortably; but upon his death, ruin and want stared them in the face, and they were reduced almost to beggary. By dint, however, of great exertions, she had contrived to keep herself and her child out of the workhouse, and she was beginning to regard the future even hopefully; when her son, just when he was approaching the age when by his efforts he might have assisted his widowed parent most materially, ran off to sea. Thus was she deprived of both husband and child, and left with only penury and grief as her bitter portion. She followed the prodigal with her tears and prayers; but more than two years elapsed without any tidings of him reaching her. At length, one Sunday evening, while she in sad loneliness of heart was brooding over his fate and trying to reconcile herself to the thought of his death, her boy, whom she still loved with all the depth of maternal affection, notwithstanding all his waywardness and disobedience, had suddenly presented him-

self before her, and with many tears besought her forgiveness. "God knows, sir, how readily I forgave him. I thought no more of his past misconduct in the delight I experienced in his return. He had been shipwrecked, and escaped by almost a miracle; he came home to me in rags, and looking very weak and ill, quite the ghost of his former self. But since then, sir, he has been more than any mother can wish, working night and day, poor fellow, to make up for his running away from me."

At this point in her narrative, she broke out into a stream of tears; I tried to comfort her, and told her how glad and thankful I was that her son had returned to her.

"Oh, sir!" she said, between the sobs which were rending her poor bosom, "how shall I tell it you? My boy, my darling Richard, is dying. He has been dangerously ill for more than a month, and I am afraid there is no hope of his recovery. I have parted with almost everything we possessed to provide him with necessaries."

I took out my purse, with the intention of giving her a trifle of money, but she hastily said, "It is not money I am seeking of you, sir;" and then, after a short pause, in which her tears flowed freely, she continued: "During his illness, he has frequently told me that had it not been for a sermon he heard when he came home to his native land, he might still have continued disobedient and wild. It seems, on his way home, that he heard some singing, and was so attracted by it that he entered the place where it was, and it was a place of worship. There he heard the sermon which determined him to change his course, and he began his new life by coming home that very evening to ask his mother's forgiveness. And oh, sir, it is after the minister that preached that sermon that I have walked miles and miles. My poor Richard says that he should be so glad to shake hands with that minister before he goes hence; but though several have come to see him, he says to me when they have gone, 'Mother, HE has not come yet.' At last some one

advised me to come to you, to tell the story I have told to so many. If you could come and see my dying boy, a mother's best prayers should ever ascend to heaven for you. We live a little way out of D——."

"What!" I said, starting with a suspicion that now for the first time crossed my mind; "and was it in D—— that he heard the sermon about which he speaks?"

"It was indeed, sir. Oh, were you ever there?"

"Was it about Christmas time that your poor boy came back?"

"It was in the month of November, sir: how well I recollect——"

"Say no more," I replied; "I believe God has sent you to the one you want at last. I was preaching at D—— about that time, and I verily believe I saw your son there."

To describe the mother's gratitude upon my signifying it as my intention at once to accompany her home, is next to impossible. I quickly obtained a conveyance, and taking with me a few necessities for the sick boy's comfort, we set off together. On the way I communed with my own thoughts, and was still, being lost in wonder at the mysterious ways of Providence. I was yet in a reverie when we arrived at our destination; and leaving the conveyance in the town, I followed my sorrowing guide to her dwelling. She had prepared me to expect a very miserable place, for she had been obliged to part with almost every article of furniture to buy food for her son; but I think I never entered a room so chill and comfortless. Not a spark of fire enlivened the rusty grate; a feeble rushlight was flickering in the window, and was in danger every moment of being extinguished by the wind, which penetrated through the broken casement, which the widow had vainly striven to mend with pieces of old newspaper; and in the corner of this abode of wretchedness was a heap of straw, upon

which the dying boy was fast breathing out his life. The parish surgeon was leaving just as I entered, and to him I said with some warmth, "Is it in a hole like this, sir, that people, however poor, ought to breathe their last?"

"You must complain to the authorities," he said, not unkindly: "I can only tell you that I have to see poor people die in *worse* places than this, almost every day of my life."

It was quite true; and in my own immediate neighbourhood, I had seen people worse housed than even this poor boy was. My voice seemed to touch a cord in the sufferer's heart; for as soon as the door was close, and a rustling in the straw attracted my attention to the spot where he was lying, I heard him utter, in tones that went to my very soul, "There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

I approached the prostrate figure of the poor boy, and for some moments my heart was too full to speak, as I recognised in those wan and wasted features the countenance of the youth who had so attracted my attention when preaching at D——. His head was resting upon the arm of a neighbour, who had come in to keep him company during the absence of his mother; but upon the approach of the latter, she resigned her post of affection into her hands, and parent and child tenderly embraced. I soon saw that death had marked him for his own, and that even a few hours would terminate his earthly existence. It was with great difficulty that he could bring his tongue to utter the words his heart wished to speak; a hectic flush overspread his countenance, and his breathing was short and irregular. I sent the kind neighbour whom we had found with him on our entering, to buy a little wood and coals; and with as little noise as possible a fire was quickly lighted, and began to send forth a cheerful blaze. After having given him a little wine, I said: "Richard, my poor boy, I am sorry to see you so ill; I have thought very much about you ever

since I saw you at D——, now more than twelve months ago, and I have often prayed God to bless you."

A smile of blessed calmness, as of the heaven to which he was going, lit up the features of the dying one, as he replied in a whisper: "It is so kind of you to come; I knew you would, if you could but be found out; and mother, *dear* mother has been so kind to take so much trouble. I behaved very ill to her."

His mother knelt down and kissed his parched lips.

"But your mother, Richard, has forgiven you," I replied; "and there is a Saviour more loving and gentle, and more ready to forgive than the tenderest mother who ever watched by a sick bed."

"Yes, sir, I know there is; I *know* there is," he repeated with great emphasis. "Thank you a thousand times for telling me about him in a way that I could understand:" and then, to my grateful surprise, he repeated the pith of the discourse I had delivered at D——.

"Oh, how I prayed that night, sir, as I was going home to ask mother's pardon! Once I felt almost inclined to turn back and not go home; but then there sounded in my ears the words, 'There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus;' and so I knelt down in a field near to where mother was living then, and prayed to God to have mercy upon me, and give me a new heart; and I have often thought since, sir, that God's reception of the sinful wasn't unlike mother's receiving of me; for she didn't mention anything about the past, except to forgive me for it, and to encourage me for the future."

"Yes, Richard, God meets his penitent and prodigal ones when they are a great way off, and clothes them in royal robes; and his angels in heaven rejoice over the repentance of a sinner."

A violent fit of coughing prevented for awhile any further conversation; but upon its subsiding, he said, in a painful whisper:

"You have come, sir, to see me die. Do not weep, mother; it's all for the best, and we shall meet again where men hunger no more, nor thirst any more, and where God wipes away all tears from our eyes. It seems hard to part now; but we shall hereafter see that it was for the best—for the best," he repeated.

The night winds howled dismally past the lattice, and shook the frail walls of the room in which a soul, redeemed not with things corruptible, but with the precious blood of Christ, was awaiting its dismissal to the enjoyment of the heavenly inheritance; and in the pauses of the storm the dying boy went on: "I used to think, sir, when I was at sea, that the wind howling like that was the angry voice of God rebuking me for my ingratitude and sinfulness. When I was shipwrecked, and was clinging to a mast for my life, the wind howled like that, and I expected to be lost here and in the world to come; but, praise be to God, he *has* made me feel it to be a faithful saying, that Christ came into the world to save sinners, and that in him there is no condemnation."

"And do you feel, Richard, that Christ is with you now?" I asked.

"Yes, sir," he replied, "I feel him underneath my soul, holding it up like mother's arm is holding my head now."

"His arm, my dear boy, is an everlasting one," I said; "you cannot slip through that, and—"

'He will present your soul,
Unblemished and complete,
Before the glory of his face
With joys divinely great.'

I read and prayed with him, and committed his soul to the keeping of a faithful and merciful Creator. His faith was fixed upon the Rock of Ages, and a sweet assurance of faith had been given him; he had the witness of the Spirit within himself that he was born again, and reconciled to the Father of spirits. I could not but

gratefully thank the Giver of all good for permitting me to witness a scene like this, and for making my feeble labours a blessing to this poor boy's soul.

Being determined to spend the night with him, I went out, and sent the conveyance back with a message that I should not return home that night: and upon my re-entering the widow's abode, her son had dropped into a deep and quiet slumber. We stood silently watching him, believing that he was sinking into his last sleep. Anything more solemn than the chamber of the dying there cannot be on this earth of ours: the death-bed, be it where it may, in the cottage or in the palace, is a spot round which our tenderest and most solemn thoughts and feelings gather. To this hour, some of my deepest feelings stand associated with that night of watching by poor Richard's dying bed. Towards morning he awoke, and said in an altered voice, "Mother, where are you? I cannot see you."

His mother knelt down and supported his fevered head upon her arm.

"Is the minister gone, mother?"

"No, Richard, I am here," I said, gently drawing my hand across his forehead, upon which the dew of death were thickly rising.

"How the wind roars! mother; it has put out all the light!" Alas! it was death's blindness that was taking hold upon him.

"Richard, my dear boy, there is a world where they need no candle, neither light of the sun: there is no night there, Richard."

"No," he replied, with startling energy, "the Lamb is the light thereof."

He now laboured fearfully for breath, and more than once I thought the vital spark had fled. Suddenly he became quite calm, drew his hand from mine, and lifted his arms in an attitude of prayer; then in words that, for their strength of tone, seemed

rather to belong to the living than the dying, he cried out, "There is NO condemnation." And fell back on his mother's bosom and died there.

AN ADVENTURE UPON EXMOOR.

READER, have you ever seen Exmoor? If you have, it will need no description; but for the benefit of those who do not know it, I will endeavour to give some general outline of the country. Imagine, then, to yourself a vast common, extending on one side as far as the eye can carry, and on the others bounded by copses and gently undulating fields, together with pasture lands, as rich as the most enthusiastic yeoman could desire. When you are fairly in the middle of the moor, not a habitation of any sort can be seen: bleak and inhospitable, with its surface covered with fern, heather, and grass, and not even a tree to afford shelter from the cold winds, it offers but a poor abode for the night to the unwary traveller, who, as not unfrequently happens, may chance to have lost his way in the dense mists that are so frequently sweeping over it. To a person who is on any of the high points of the moor, there appears sometimes a most curious phenomenon: though enveloped on every side by the thickest mist, he may look down and see the surrounding fields quite clearly, lighted up by the rays of the sun, which fall upon them through the overhanging fog. This, however, needs rather to be seen than described; and I should certainly advise any one that had sufficient leisure, and was within a practicable distance, to run down for a few days to inspect the delicious beauty of the towns and villages of North Devon, as well as the wilder and perhaps, to some, less inviting scenery of Exmoor. But now let me begin my tale.

One fine morning in August, in company with my friend

Thornton and his landlord, an old farmer with whom I was staying, I left the little village of North Molton to spend a day at the beautiful watering places of Lynmouth and Lynton. The first three miles of our journey were along a road, on one side of which lay a hilly common covered with the purple heather, then in full bloom on the other, by the most beautiful woods, so lovely and picturesque in their tints of hazy green, that I am afraid it would have hardly pleased the ears of the more imaginative and poetical to have heard them styled by our old companion under the more technical denomination of "fox covers." My friend kept amusing me with tales of the different hunts he had had after foxes started by Lord Portsmouth's hounds in these sylvan retreats, till we came to the edge of bleak and dismal Exmoor, where the mist was so intense that we were obliged to put on our macintoshes, which we had taken the precaution to buckle to our saddles before starting. By keeping along the road which winds across the moor, we got to one of its highest points. Gradually we left the mist behind us, as we began to descend the almost precipitous road that leads into Lynmouth.

Arrived here, we put our horses up at the Lyndale Hotel, which I would recommend in the highest terms to all travellers and tourists. We then proceeded to inspect the beauties of the village, which were quite new to me, as well as to lave our bodies in the cool waters of the Bristol Channel; and so returned to dinner with our appetites considerably sharpened by a ride of sixteen miles, a short constitutional, and a bathe. After the conclusion of our meal we agreed to go to Lynton, where we saw all the *lions* of that beautiful little spot. Seven o'clock in the evening came, and found us gathering up the reins in our hands preparatory to mounting our horses for the homeward ride. Half an hour along a narrow path, above a deep precipice, brought us to the most beautiful of all the places we had as yet visited, Waters' Meet. Here

the almost deafening roar of the conflicting torrents, the spray dashed from rock to rock and tree to tree, together with the overhanging boughs which by their dark-green foliage form a sort of roof, are all calculated to inspire the mind with a love of the beautiful and picturesque. Winding along a path surrounded on all sides by the most magnificent scenery, we at last reached the outskirts of Exmoor. Here, as we stopped to cast our farewell glance upon the foaming waters of the Lyn, which lay beneath us, Thornton suddenly exclaimed—

“Now, Mr. Passmore” (for that was the name of the old farmer who accompanied us), “if the moor is pretty free from mist, I can find a way home which will save us more than three miles: shall we try it?”

“Well, sir, there’s no saying,” replied he; “but I don’t think, by look of the sky at least, there’s going to be much fog; so we may as well try, sir: ‘nothing venture, nothing gain.’”

“All right; then we will,” exclaimed the joint voices of Thornton and myself.

Onward we rode through real Devonshire lanes, covered with fern and grass, till we got to Exmoor. “Hurrah! there’s no mist,” we shouted out; and so, thinking ourselves safe, launched boldly into the moor. After having ridden for about half an hour, we gradually became alive to the reality of a thick fog advancing upon us; but we were now so far on in the right road, as to think there was more danger in turning back than in going on. At last, as the turf became unpleasantly wet and soft beneath our horses’ hoofs, I said, “Isn’t this a bog?”

“Well,” said Thornton, smiling, “I think we have come a little bit too much to our right, but we must go rather more to the left, then we shall be all right.” We accordingly did; but nevertheless, it didn’t mend matters at all, as every step further covered our horses’ legs more and more in the boggy soil which was beneath us.

As this increased, we could see timidity visibly depicted on the countenance of the old farmer, who at last gave vent to his fears by exclaiming, "My good sir, this'll never do; we must turn back."

"Nonsense," said Thornton; "don't you see it's firmer over here? For'ard I say; don't 'try back.'"

For a few steps the ground certainly was a little firmer, but it then began to get bad again; and just as our old friend was going to remonstrate, we espied one of those large gutters, or, to use a more dignified word, chasms, which are so common on Exmoor, down which Thornton, who was riding first, went, and we, after the manner of the game of "follow my leader," succeeded. Now, at no time is it particularly pleasant to ride down one of these places, as, being used for the purpose of a drain, it is always wet and damp; much less still is it to be desired when there is a heavy fog settled over the whole moor. But as this path was better than the swampy track we had just been following, we chose it. On we jogged in silence, till we came to an apparent termination of our career—for no less a sight than the end of this mammoth drain came before our eyes, up the sides of which it was impossible to climb, as they descended perpendicularly. On one side, however, there was an opening, in the shape of a six-barred gate, new, and strong, and locked; beyond which a gentle slope led up to the surface of the common. To try to get through this was now our only chance; but how to achieve this was what puzzled us. We couldn't leap over it, as there was no run for our horses; and even if there had been, I very much doubt whether, in their fagged and weary state, they would have done it; and the bars were so provokingly strongly put up as to be impossible to break down; un-hinging it, too, was out of the question, for it was constructed in such a way as to render this impracticable. What was to be done, then? To file the padlock away was a work of the last extremity,

but it must be done; and I fortunately had in my pocket-knife a small file: so we agreed to take it by turns, Thornton beginning first.

"Done at last!" said my friend, surveying his work with a self-complacent sort of air, as much as to say, "See, I have saved you:" and through we passed. Glad we were indeed to find ourselves on *terra firma*, as we considered firm turf after the slippery-sloppy soil our horses had been wading through. Having ridden on for some time, and coming to no road, Thornton, who was getting rather impatient, said, "I tell you what it is, there's no use in going on like this: just hold my horse, and I will go and reconnoitre a little."

"All right;" and away he went, leaving us in a state of the most anxious suspense till he should return. A quarter of an hour passed, half an hour, and still no Thornton: we then began to be really afraid lest he might have lost his way.

"Halloo-o-o-o-o!" no reply. Same noise repeated; no answer; up and down we wandered, for more than an hour and a half, never leaving the spot far, lest he might come there in our absence. At last, after what seemed to us hours, we heard the shrill note of a dog-whistle, which I knew Thornton had with him.

"Here we are-re-re-re," shouted we with all our might.

"Coming," replied a voice, through the cold and heavy mist, and in less than a minute he was up beside us.

"Oh," said he, "I've found out (puff! gasp! for he was thoroughly winded) where we are: we're at Exhead, the worst ground in the whole forest—no road for miles."

Pleasant, wasn't it? Here we were, at half-past nine, on the worst ground of the moor; no road for ever so far, and full ten miles from home, enveloped in a thick mist. Suddenly Thornton, who still maintained his proud position as outrider, cried out, "Hurrah! here's the Simmon's Bath Road."

Half an hour more brought us to the Simmon's Bath Inn, where we dismounted, eager to procure refreshment for man and beast; and, after having gained this, we merrily passed over the six more miles which lay between us and North Molton. Joyous indeed was our talk over the fire that evening; for, notwithstanding the time of the year, the dampness and cold to which we had been exposed required it; and heartily did we congratulate ourselves upon being within four warm and comfortable walls, instead of upon the bleak and dreary moor.

So ended our adventure upon Exmoor, and pleasant indeed is it now to recall it; for, as the man of Arpinum says, "The remembrance of past sorrow, in the midst of security, inspires pleasure," though, if all our other sorrows in life were not heavier than this one, we should find its path rather smoother than we do.

ADVENTURE IN PERU.

ON the coast of Peru, between the Cordillera of the Andes and the ocean, is a tract of country rarely visited by Europeans. The traveller accidentally thrown upon it might imagine himself suddenly transported from the soft Pacific, with its palm-clad isles and coral reefs, to the centre of the great African desert, exchanging the scented air and steady trade-winds for the whirling sand hill and the death-breathing sirocco.

Extending over a length of five hundred leagues, its breadth varying from eighty miles to merely a few paces—as the foot of the sierra advances to or recedes from the sea—is a belt of barren sand, its desolate surface only broken at wide intervals by the passage of some mountain stream, which, spreading fertility on its rainless banks, raises in the sand ocean a narrow island, covered

with the rich and varied vegetation of the tropics. At times, the snows, melting on the peaks of the vast mountains, hurry down the ravines in torrents; and the flood, filling the little watercourses, overflows their banks, and spreads even into the thirsty desert, giving new life to the scorched fruits and flowers that grace the little strip of green.

Between these streams there is no living creature. A curse seems to rest upon the land; for, as the lofty sierra draws into its bosom every moisture-laden cloud, no drop of rain falls on the parched coast. No solitary blade of grass decks the yellow surface; the hardy chinchilla seeks refuge in the rugged hills; and the stately condor, soaring aloft till he is but a dark spot upon the pure blue sky, never stoops to so inhospitable a resting place.

Though destitute of life, the desert is not motionless. The fine sand, caught up by an eddying wind, is carried along in high columns, long lines of which are seen dancing over the plains, occasionally striking against each other and dispersing in immense clouds, which are again caught up and hurried on as before. Sometimes a number of small pillars are united, and these again absorb others; until the mass becomes too heavy for support, and revolving for a short time on its base, falls in a semicircular mound, against which other columns break themselves, until the mound rises to a hill, still retaining a curved shape. Hundreds of these *médanos* are scattered over the desert, some of them of considerable size; but the close vicinity of the Cordillera throws into the shade every other eminence, and reduces the sand mountains to mere mole-hills on the plain. Close to the sea, the low roar of the surf, and the constant leaping of the waves, with the presence of numerous sea-fowl, break the death-like monotony of the scene.

My visit to this dismal spot was paid under circumstances which threw no charm around its horrors, but rather added to their strength. Fond as I ever have been of wild adventures and strange

scenes, it would require much to tempt me to repeat the one which led me here. I had just left a ship in one of the Peruvian ports, and, having nothing better to do, joined two sailors in the purchase of a boat, with the necessary outfit for a sealing trip. Seals, we were told, were plentiful on the islands on the coast, and we were advised to make our first attempt on a small group which lay about thirty leagues to the southward of the port of Pisco. We reached our destination after a long and heavy pull against the south-east trade-wind, and found it to be a mere cluster of barren rocks, covered with a slight coating of guano, completely destitute of vegetation, and without a single drop of fresh water. Against the latter contingency we were well provided; the bottom of our large whale-boat being stowed with several huge earthen jars which had once been filled with *Italia* or *Pisco*, the white brandy of Peru, but which now held a far more precious liquid—good spring water.

The rocks were alive with flocks of seabirds; a few turtle occasionally contrived to crawl upon the lower edges; and on the level of the sea were numerous small caves, the rendezvous of our friends, the seals. We did not find the latter so plentiful as we had been led to expect; a circumstance which we attributed in some measure to the presence of a number of sealions, or hair-seals, a species much larger than the fur-seal, but destitute of the fur, which alone makes the latter valuable. The seal itself, and the mode of capturing it, have been so frequently described, that I shall not stay to weary the reader with a repetition. I may, however, remark that the colour of the seal is a beautiful silver gray, that being the tint of the long hair which forms its outward covering, and which is removed by the furrier, leaving exposed the soft brown fur with which every one is familiar. The animals are generally captured during the night, or rather, in the hour preceding sunrise, before they begin to leave their holes for the water.

A single blow on the fore part of the head instantly kills them; though, if the stroke be unskilfully given, the seal will often make a furious attack on the aggressor, gnashing his strong white teeth, and barking like a dog. A full-grown hair-seal is a dangerous adversary; and, though generally easily avoided, from his inability to make a short quick turn, he will when enraged spring forward on his flippers with considerable speed.

We quickly cleared the island on which we first landed, and, having secured about forty skins, prepared to pass over to another that lay at two or three miles distance. The spring tides were in, and with them a tremendous surf is always rolling on the coasts of the Pacific, which renders landing even on a smooth beach a very delicate manœuvre, requiring great care to prevent the boat from filling or capsizing. Ours was, as I have said, a South Sea or American whale-boat, built stem and stern alike, both sharpened to a point, and steered by a long oar projecting over the stern—a mode of steering remarkably well suited to a heavy surf, as the powerful leverage of the oar gives the steersman a control over the boat which the common rudder does not possess.

The only landing place on the island we wished to reach was a narrow strip of beach to seaward; from each side of which a small reef of detached rocks stretched round the island, and on this the heavy rollers were dashing themselves to pieces, and the white surf boiling and roaring over it most gloriously. We pulled for the patch of green water opposite the little beach, and waiting for an extra-sized roller, with one hearty stroke the boat glanced between the rocks. At this critical moment, the steering strop, which connects the steer oar with the boat's stern-post, snapped; the boat instantly broached to, and came broadside on to the sea; the next wave curled over her for an instant, broke, and she was gone. The sea which filled her carried me on to the shore, but the reflux washed me out again beyond the line of surf, happily clear

of the rocks. With a few strokes I was again within the channel, and a following wave carried me high up on the beach, where digging my fingers in the sands, I held on for a moment, and then ran up above the tide-mark. One of my companions was already ashore; the other, who was steering when the boat filled, was gone—most probably crushed on the rocks, and then washed round the point of the island. We looked in vain for him. The boat was knocked to pieces; two oars, a few fragments, a jar half filled with water, and some pieces of another, were all that reached the island; everything that we possessed, excepting the few skins we had taken, was irrecoverably gone. The skins were hidden on the first island, where we intended to call for them on our return.

After the first feelings of pleasure and expressions of thanksgiving for our safety were over, we began to consider what were our prospects for the future. They were not very satisfactory. The provisions had all disappeared, the island offered no substitute, and we were at least eight miles from the main land, and out of the usual track of vessels running down the coast. After a short consultation, we commenced a tour of our newly acquired territory, to ascertain if it would afford us any sort of shelter, as our little tent had gone to the fishes. Our search was unsuccessful; we picked up a few limpets, that served for supper, and at sunset lay down on the lee-side of the island, wrapped in our ponchos, which we had happily strapped round us with the belt that contained our sealing knives. On the second day, we found a turtle on the little beach, and made a prize of him, cutting the flesh in strips, which we laid in the sun to dry, as the Brazilians prepare jerked beef. We had thus a tolerably good supply of food, but our small allowance of water would not long hold out, and we suffered terribly from the intense heat, our only shelter from which was—wrapping the ponchos round our heads, and standing up to the neck in water. This we repeated several times during the day; and I have no

doubt that the process aided to alleviate thirst, and thus assisted us to spin out the contents of the little jar. So long as daylight lasted, our eyes were constantly fixed upon the sea, and many a white seabird was mistaken for a distant sail. At night we dreaded that some vessel would pass unseen; and often sent across the ocean a long shrill cry, which we hoped might reach a passing ship hidden from us by the darkness.

At last, on the morning of the sixth day, we saw creeping along the land, a small schooner, steering a course that would evidently bring her close to our island. We fastened a shirt to one of the boat's oars, which we fixed on the highest point of the rock; and with the assistance of the tinder box that I always carried at my belt, and the expenditure of half my cotton shirt, we raised a fire from the small remnants of our boat.

The wind was very light, and the schooner seemed asleep on the water; I thought she would never near us; our fire was dying out, and we had nothing to replenish it; we were almost losing hope, when suddenly there rose to the vessel's peak a flag, which blowing out, showed us the Chilian ensign with its single star, and we knew that she had seen us. In two hours we were aboard. We found she was a Chilian schooner from one of the windward ports of Peru, bound to the Sandwich Islands, where the captain proposed to take us; but, as we had no wish to visit them, he stood in close to the land and sent the boat ashore with us, supplying us with as much provisions and water as we chose to carry, in return for our seal-skins, which we recovered from the island.

This was my first visit to a Peruvian desert. The captain of the schooner had explained to us the nature of the country through which we should have to travel; but, as he also informed us that we were no great distance from one of the intersecting streams, on which were several haciendas, we determined to proceed. Fearful of being lost if we ventured into the interior, we kept for the most

part close to the sea, following the indentations of the coast. No stranger ever dares to cross from stream to stream without a guide, and even these are frequently at fault, as the drifting sand invariably obliterates the tracks; and the only landmarks are the ever-changing *médanos*, and occasional half-buried heaps of bones, the remains of mules and asses that have perished in the desert. The inhabitants of the little villages on the rivers relate many dreadful narratives of the sufferings of travellers, who have lost their way and died for want of water.

In 1823, a vessel, having three hundred troops aboard, was wrecked about fourteen leagues south-west of Pisco. The crew and soldiers escaped the milder death by water; many of them to meet a far more terrible one—to perish by its want; their blistered lips and swollen tongues mocked by the scalding sand ocean, which seemed, to their reeling eyes, to heave and set in waves of liquid metal. Though so near the town, upwards of a hundred men died in the attempt to reach it, and numbers dropped exhausted on the route. Immediately on the receipt of intelligence of the disaster, a troop of cavalry, with a supply of water, was despatched to the assistance of the survivors. Many of them were discovered lying around a clump of palms, which occur at very rare intervals near the sea, and beneath which a small quantity of water is generally found. Some of the miserable men had expired in the act of tearing up the ground with their hands, in the desperate search for the means of quenching their burning thirst; and few among them were able to raise to their blackened lips the precious water brought by their comrades. Such were the effects of only three days' sojourn in this desolate land, where the bones of those who perished in it still mark the scene of the terrible calamity.

Already weakened and reduced by our stay upon the little island, we were but ill fitted to contend against the hardships of a passage through the desert; and, though our stock of provisions

and water was sufficient to insure us against present thirst and famine, yet these, though the chief, were not the only evils. Anxious to make as much way as possible during the cool night hours—for it was nearly sundown when we landed—we travelled on until long after the Southern Cross, the timepiece of the Indian, had passed its meridian and pointed to the west; but the frequent détours we were compelled to make round the curved beaches, added considerably to our journey. At length, worn out by fatigue, we lay down on a heap of seaweed, and slept soundly until sunrise. Refreshed by our rest, and by a hearty breakfast of biscuit and jerked beef, washed down by a draught of water and *italia* (Peruvian white brandy) with which the Chilean captain had supplied us, we proposed to make a short stretch into the desert before the sun had attained his full power; for we expected to reach the river on the following day, and I was anxious to gain a better idea of this singular country than could be obtained by merely travelling along its coast.

With a recklessness upon which I now look back in astonishment, we left our bag of provisions and jar of water on the edge of the narrow line of seaweed which marked the presence of the high spring tides; supposing that we could easily return to them, and unwilling to burden ourselves with a heavy load whilst wading through the sand. After walking about a couple of miles inland, we lost the low roar of the surf, and became more conscious of the strange realities of our position. As I stood apart from my companion, who had slightly preceded me, my first impression was of the utter loneliness, the intense solitude of the scene. I had wandered over the plains of Australia, and the pampas of Chili; the thick forests of Tasmania, the swamps of Ecuador, and the rugged passes of the Andes; but I had never before felt, in its full force, what it was to be alone. The restless sand was still; not a breath of air was there to stir it; not a cloud moved in the heavens;

and the earth shone with a steady glare that did not even flicker in the motionless atmosphere. As I raised my foot the liquid sand flowed in and instantly erased the impression; the soil, like its sister ocean, refused to retain a token of man's presence.

It was a realization of the artist's idea of the last man, in all his horror-stricken loneliness; but its solitude was more perfect; for he looks on the wreck of what has once been life, and sees around him the results of motion and the marks of change. But here, every portion of the landscape seemed to have retained the exact position in which it was created; and though, in fact, the most changeful of all scenery, yet its desolate aspect ever remained the same. The idea of death was not present: death would have implied change, and even the presence of the dead would have been companionship. The eye roamed eagerly over the scene, seeking some point to rest upon. A dark rock, a solitary tree, even the shadow of a flitting cloud, would have been relief. The stillness was frightful; its very perfection destroyed the feeling of repose which soothes the mind when gazing on a quiet landscape, and the most grating sound would have struck pleasantly on the straining ear. Every sense was painfully alert; but no distant landmark, no wandering perfume, no low tone or passing breeze responded to the call. A feeling of utter hopelessness oppressed me; and as I turned and caught the towering cordillera stretching away, peak above peak, the sudden barrier, while it broke the spell, appeared to shut me out from all communion with the world, and leave me still more helplessly alone.

But the sun was now high in the heavens, and the sand burned our feet as we turned to make our way back to the sea. And then, for the first time, did we remember that, all traces of our path being blotted out, we might possibly miss the spot on which we had carelessly left our stores. A simultaneous exclamation of terror burst from us; but, recollecting that we must eventually

reach some part of the beach, we turned our backs on the mountains and the sun, and plodded resolutely onwards. The breeze was coming down just as it does at sea, making cat's-paws in the sand, and scattering before it little sprays of dust. It reached us hot and dry, and as it increased in strength, clouds of fine sand swept over us, filling our eyes and nostrils, and penetrating the blistered skin. Wrapping the ponchos round our heads, we pushed on, and shortly came in sight of the sea, and heard with rapture the sullen roll of the breaking surf.

Arrived on the hard beach, we were unable to decide on which hand lay our treasures; but seeing no marks of our passage, we concluded that we were beyond our last night's resting place, and so turned back towards it. Though little more than two hours had elapsed since we parted with our water-jar, yet we were already suffering the most tormenting thirst; and, with tongues incapable of speech, and eyes half blinded by the sand and sun, we prosecuted our search with all the earnestness of men whose lives depended on its success. In a few minutes my companion discovered the footprints, still legible on the wet beach, where we had turned off into the desert. Twenty yards further was our resting place, and here, as we had left it, covered with seaweed, was the much prized water. The flask of brandy was tossed contemptuously aside, and the narrow neck of the *botija* passed alternately from mouth to mouth, furnishing a draught which all the gold and silver buried in the frowning mountains could not have purchased.

After a short rest beneath the slight shadow afforded by a heap of mingled sand and weed, we started afresh, as the sun declined, and the breeze hauling from seaward, blew with comparative coolness. As we passed the track, which we had recognised in the morning, and which had led us to our lost water, I could not help recalling the favourite book of my boyhood—a book that has made more sailors than pressgang or bounty money—and remembering

among its black engravings one entitled "Crusoe's astonishment on discovering the footprint in the sand." But whilst poor Robinson's discovery was to him but a source of dismay and terror, ours was a sign of gladness, a token of hope renewed. On the second day, we fell in with patches of thin sickly grass; by degrees other marks of vegetation appeared; and in the evening we reached the river, then a small stream that rippled gently along its bed, but in the melting of the mountain snows increased to a rapid, foaming torrent, sweeping impetuously along its channel, overflowing its banks, and spreading fertility around it. Unlike other rivers, these decrease as they approach the sea, absorbed by the thirsty country through which they pass, and retained to supply the extensive systems of irrigation which are in constant operation on their banks. Travelling up the course of the river, we shortly afterwards arrived at a sugar plantation, where we were hospitably received by its owner, a Frenchman, and a long resident in the country. What a contrast between the scenery here and that through which we had just passed! from a land destitute of all vegetation to one covered with it in its most luxuriant form was but a single step. From an arid, desolate region, where the bleached bones of the dead were the only signs that life had ever been, to a fruitful land glowing with rich produce, brightened by a lively, sparkling stream, and gladdened by man's presence, was a change indeed. To us, so recently escaped from the most dreadful of all deaths, the scene had double charms; and though familiar with the rich products of the tropics, yet they met us here as new acquaintances, and we looked upon them with fresh pleasure. There were patches of tall sugar-cane; fields of noble plantain and banana, decked with the rich purple of their pendent clusters, and their huge dark green leaves shadowing the bulky melons that trail their slender stems beneath; the branchy lime tree, its yellow fruit twinkling among the thick dark foliage; the orange and

pomegranate ; and the creeping vine, laden with heavy bunches of ripe downy berries. Here was the guava, a low bushy shrub, covered with tempting apples ready for conversion into rich, fine-flavoured jelly ; there the sombre olive offered its green oily fruit. Yonder were a few scattered date trees near a field of stately maize, the corn-cobs waving their long silky plumes above fresh rows of juicy melons, guarded by a fence of prickly cactus, with its gorgeous flowers fast ripening into fruit. The black alligator pear, its hard kernel bedded in a mass of greenish marrow of peculiar flavour, eaten with salt, and highly prized by native palates, was also there ; with the hot crimson chili or capsicum, and the wrinkled tomata, growing beside the spreading calabash tree, with its crop of washing tubs and sugar basins.

But see, on this low tree, amidst the narrow pointed leaves, hangs the pride and darling of Peru—the fragrant cherrimoya. A little larger than an apple, with a scaly rind, its colour dark green intermingled with spots and lines of a greyish brown or black, it has not a very prepossessing appearance. But open it : sprinkled with cinnamon-coloured seeds, is a white juicy pulp, whose delicious flavour almost warrants the extravagant encomiums of the Peruvians—in which even the grave Humboldt has joined—and you, as the luscious syrup trickles over your palate, are half guilty of high treason in ranking it above the plums, and pears, and apples, that flourish round your own old home in far-off England.

But here is a plant you have seen before—the humble but invaluable potato in its native country ; and as though it liked its own soil best, it is large and of most excellent quality. Here, too, are gigantic members of the same family—the yam and the camôte. The leguminosæ are represented by beans, callavancas, and the perpetual feijole, a small bean which appears at every meal. Our favourite cereal, wheat, is absent ; and its place is but ill supplied by the yellow Indian corn. On the sides of the mountains grow

barley, rye, and above all the quinoa, which in some parts of Peru becomes the staff of life. It is the produce of a small shrubby plant, bearing thick clusters of little flowers, succeeding which are pods filled with small seeds. These seeds are cooked like rice, and with the boiled leaves form the chief sustenance of vast numbers of the Indians of South America. But we are loitering on the way, loth to leave so rich a garden.

After watching the process of converting the thick cane-juice into *chancaca*—for the sugar is not granulated, but cooled in large cakes about an inch in thickness, to which that name is given—we travelled up the river, in company with an Indian mule-driver and his troop of asses laden with produce for Yea, a large town a few leagues distant. When near the sierra, we struck off into the desert, our guide directing his course by the *médanos*, which long habit had enabled him to convert into landmarks, though from their frequent shiftings and changing shapes they are but sorry guide-posts. We reached Yea, however, in safety; and as a beaten road leads from hence to its seaport, Pisco, our journeyings in this desolate country were over, and we could once more mingle in

“The crowd, the hum, the shock of men.”

AN ADVENTURE IN CARLINGFORD BAY; OR, THE SPRIG OF LAVENDER.

YES, I have been wearing a sprig of lavender in my coat all day long. The 26th of September is with me an anniversary day; and the sprig of lavender vividly recalls the memory of a scene of peril and deliverance.

The sun rose brightly this morning, and through a cloudless sky he has passed upward and onward to his rest. It was otherwise

on the 26th of September, 1829. On that day a lovely scene was made gloomy and sad by black clouds careering through the heavens, and by the angry winds, which in fitful gusts swept over the waters of a bay which the day before shone in the sunlight like a sheet of silver. On that morning, I had gone forth with a younger brother, as we were wont to do, along the shore. We had recently been introduced to a young gentleman, the son of Captain O——. He was a *deaf mute*, but no one could tell from his appearance that he was so. He had received a superior education at Glasgow, could read and write as well as converse on the fingers, was full of life and energy, and looked in his undress sailor's garb the *beau idéal* of manly beauty.

When this gentleman, who had just succeeded, by the help of two boatmen, in launching a boat for an excursion, saw my companion and myself standing on the shore, he eagerly waved his hand, beckoning us to join him. We had just expressed to each other our reluctance to do so, in consequence of the threatening aspect of the weather; yet, as it was useless to call out to him, we ran down to the water's edge, when by means of signs, as well as through the boatman, he gave us to understand that they were about to have a sail to Rostrevor. With youthful thoughtlessness, putting away all our apprehensions, we leaped at once into the stern of the boat and seated ourselves by his side. A moment afterwards, the sails were filled with a fresh breeze, and like a seabird our bark sped so swiftly before it, that in a quarter of an hour or little more we had reached the intended limits of our excursion.

But our ardent friend was not satisfied: he intimated to us, on a pencilled slip of paper, that he had friends at Carlingford, whom he longed to see, and so the signal was given to the two boatmen to direct our voyage thither. Five miles were thus to be passed over ere we could reach our destination. We swept speedily

onward; but as soon as we reached that part of the bay which lies between two lofty mountains, we found ourselves exposed to imminent peril. Suddenly, now from one quarter, then from another, a squall came with darkening wing and rushing noise, and, striking the boat in a moment, bent it over, until the water began to rush in over its side. The alarm occasioned by this was much heightened when we discovered that both boatmen were in a state bordering on intoxication. We implored them to lower the sails; but the bottle of spirits which they had brought with them had made them reckless of danger. At length, by dint of urgent importunities, we prevailed on them to agree to our proposal, and, "brailing up" the sails, they plied the oars vigorously for an hour, at the end of which time we landed at Carlingford.

Here, climbing up some steep cliffs, we examined the thick walls and desolate chambers of a fortress erected by king John. We traversed the town itself, nestling as it does beneath a lofty mountain, which, rising up abruptly several thousand feet, like a mighty wall, causes a premature twilight long before the hour when the sun has set in the west. Our new-made acquaintance repaired with joyous expectation to the mansion of the family which he had in the morning so earnestly desired to visit. But, to his great disappointment, we discovered that all its inmates were from home. There was a sweet garden plot before the windows, and along the gravel walk which led up to the door was a hedge of lavender, which filled the air with its perfume. I plucked a sprig from that fragrant hedge and placed it in my button-hole.

The time at length came when we must return homeward. Seven long miles were before us, and it was now four o'clock in the afternoon of one of September's closing days. Our boat, which we had left on the sands, was floated by the fast-flowing tide: and in the warm-hearted desire that we should receive no

injury to health, our stalwart young friend, who was well accustomed to the sea, and every inch a sailor, laid hold of us one after the other, and carrying us through the water, placed us safely and dry-shod on board. We were speedily under weigh: the sails flapped the masts at first, while we were under the shelter of the mighty rock on which the old castle was built; but by and by we stood out into the bay. We had fondly believed that all our perils were past. What, then, was our surprise when, about two miles ahead of our boat, and in the direct track which it was necessary for us to take, we saw the sea violently upheaved and tossed into foam! It was as if some sea monster was disporting himself beneath, and in his gambols disturbing the otherwise placid waters. Ever and anon, also, we saw the waters caught up by a sudden squall, and borne along on its tempestuous wings in sheets of white spray for several hundred yards. Our companion O—— gazed at this spectacle with intense interest, his face darkened, he shook his head, and by a great effort he gave utterance, in harsh and guttural accents, to the boding words, “Bad! verra bad!” We could not but share in his apprehensions; but these disturbed waters, upon which “the war of elements” seemed to concentrate its fury, were still at some distance, and perhaps ere we reached the place all would be tranquil again. We were deceived in our reckoning: the crisis of danger was at hand. While standing out under a quiet breeze from the rocky coast, suddenly, within a hundred yards of our boat, a “white squall” rose up as it were from the sea in its fury, and with an appalling noise as of a mighty whirlwind, and with tempest speed, it rushed towards us, and almost in a moment was upon us. I have often since thought of it as a great winding sheet wrapping up death’s victims in its folds; and perhaps the figure was suggested by the fatal issue of its fury.

Our terrified boatmen leaped instantly to their feet to “brail up” the sails; but it was too late. Our boat was a long narrow

yawl, employed by the local officers of the revenue for the boarding of merchant vessels coming into the bay, and not fitted, like the broad-beamed fishing boats along the coast, to encounter the violence of such a tempest. No sooner, therefore, did the squall strike the boat than she was upset, and in a moment I was plunged into the foaming waves. From boyhood's days, both my brother and myself had been accustomed to swim in the pellucid waters of the river Bann, on whose banks stood the ivy-decked cottage of our birth. We were therefore able to sustain ourselves when immersed in the sea, and thus had time to realize our condition, and under the powerful instinct of self-preservation to seek how we might best escape from the jaws of death. As for myself, my first glance was toward the shore; but, discouraged and almost despairing, I turned round and looked towards the boat, in the hope that I might be able to cling to it until help could arrive. I saw at one glance how hopeless it was to expect the boat to be righted: it was completely overturned; and even to secure one's self on the keel was impracticable, as the waves washed violently over it. The masts, with the sails dragged in the brine, were lying almost on the surface of the water; and with both hands holding on to the top of the mainmast, and submerged to the throat, the deaf mute O——, looking anxiously toward the shore, first met my eye. Nearer to me, and struggling in the waves, was the elder of the two boatmen. His large head, covered with thickly curling and raven hair, his dark eyes flashing terror, his whole aspect marked by anxiety and affright, are still vividly pictured on my memory. As he battled the waves with his brawny arms and limbs, he shouted aloud from time to time for help, in which his mate, who could not swim, but who was clinging to the stern of the boat, joined lustily. The swimmer, as I have said, was the elder of the two, and, as I afterwards discovered, was a veteran in sin, a drunkard and a debauchee. Only the night before, the sleep of the inhabitants and visitors, and

of ourselves among the rest, at W——, had been disturbed by the noise of some brawl in which he was involved.

While I hesitated as to the course I should adopt—whether to cling to the boat or to make for the shore—the voice of my brother fell on my ear. He called on me to follow him as he swam away from the wreck, and I did so. At this moment my presence of mind was to myself wonderful. I felt that if we put forth all our strength and speed, we should ere long sink from exhaustion, and at once I cautioned my companion to swim slowly. I thoroughly realized my position. I knew I was on the brink of eternity; but the love of life was strong in me. Dear parents and familiar friends passed in review before me. I looked to the encompassing mountains, and I said to myself, “Am I indeed here to perish?” It was hard, almost impossible, for me to believe it. And as we pressed on with measured strokes, words of mutual encouragement were spoken, and earnest ejaculations rose to heaven. The cap which my brother wore had fallen off upon his shoulder, as he was tossed out of the boat when it was upset. It was strapped beneath his chin, and thus retained, it was gradually swept round over the shoulder until it reached the mouth and threatened to suffocate him. With great difficulty he succeeded in shifting it to the other shoulder. Had it been otherwise, or had one of us been disabled by cramp, or been sinking from exhaustion, and the other endeavoured to save him, there is no doubt that both would have perished.

We continued to swim towards the shore, on which stood a number of reapers, who had suspended their work, and who were watching us and our companions with intense interest, without any means apparently at hand to rescue us. Meantime a gracious Providence was providing deliverers for us. Two boatmen, who had left on foot the town of Carlingford soon after we had left the harbour, on crowning the top of the hill which commanded

a view of the bay, observed the furious squall and its disastrous result. They instantly turned, and running back to the harbour, at about the distance of a mile, launched a boat and rowed towards us. Meantime we struggled on: the shore was now within a hundred yards, but our strength was failing fast. Suddenly a boat appeared: it was almost upon us ere we perceived it. What a moment of glad surprise! It was as life from the dead!

One moment, and the stalwart sailors seized us and dragged us into the boat, our clothes saturated with water, and the sudden reaction after continued excitement almost causing me to swoon. Speedily, however, I revived, and I eagerly asked after the fate of our three companions. Unseen by us, two boats had from opposite quarters come to the rescue, and one of these had made for the wrecked boat. That boat now approached our own. We asked for the tidings—our eyes themselves beheld but *one* saved. It was the man who could not swim, whom I had left clinging to the stern of the sinking boat. Of the other two, young O—— and the curly-headed brawny mariner, whose cry of alarm was still ringing in my ears, not a trace could be found, not even a floating cap or handkerchief to indicate the spot where “the strong swimmer in his agony” had gone down. Of O——, we heard that, losing his hold of the top of the mast, he had swam round to the man who clung to the boat, and by signs invited him to get on his back, that he might carry him to the land. The man told us that he had refused to do so, and that then Mr. O—— had struck out for the shore, and when he had got away about ten yards he saw him sink. I now realized more than ever the greatness of our deliverance: at the same time the sudden doom of two men whom I had so lately seen in the full vigour of health and life filled my mind with horror.

As soon as we reached home, the news of the upsetting of the revenue boat and the drowning of two men spread rapidly through the town. We had not long reached our lodgings when Captain

O——, the father of our lamented and lost young friend, entered. He sat down opposite to us, and, asking us one or two questions, we detailed to him all that had occurred. He listened in speechless agony; and without speaking one word, and with “a grief too deep for tears,” that gray-haired soldier and sire went away. Next morning a fleet of boats was seen off the headland, where our bark had been swamped; but it was not till two days after that the body of O—— was discovered, and three weeks passed away ere the body of the drowned boatman—by that time half devoured by the shell-fish—was found. There seems to be with some a strange pleasure in being the first to bring tidings, even if they are bad; and so it was in our family circle. But ere long the swift post assured our loving father that his sons were yet alive.

With all these never-to-be-forgotten incidents crowding on my memory, the 26th of September never returns without exciting in my breast emotions of gratitude to our great Deliverer. Since that day, these long years back, many changes have come in the lot and life of both myself and surviving brother. To one has been assigned “the work of the ministry,” and that in three different spheres of toil. The other treads the path of an honourable and upright merchant. But each year, as the 26th of September draws nigh, the one is accustomed, in a brief postscript to his weekly letter, to say, “Let us not forget to give thanks to God in the recollection of our wonderful deliverance from sudden death.”

There are flowers imperishably associated with great events in the public history and life of nations. The rose, the shamrock, and the thistle, are the emblems of that United Kingdom whose privileges we share. The orange lily reminds us of “Orange Boven” and the Revolution of 1688; and the fleur de lis of Henri Quatre and the Huguenot cavaliers of France. But, to me, there is a flower more dear and sacred, for it always recalls the memorable day of my merciful deliverance. It is, a SPRIG OF LAVENDER.

MY ENCOUNTER WITH A BUFFALO.

MINE has been an adventurous life. Thrice have I been shipwrecked, twice shot at, while once, by the accidental discharge of my own gun, the ball carried away the peak of my cap. I have had ugly encounters with snakes, have been upset both from horses and gigs; while on one occasion, when at sea, I fell out of a cabin window and was nearly drowned; besides many other hairbreadth escapes, to relate all of which would occupy too much space. But I mean now to speak of one adventure which occurred in 1840; one to which I can seldom recur without laughing and shuddering alternately. I laugh to think of the ridiculous figure I must have cut in the eyes of idle spectators; I shudder to remember that my life was so nearly forfeited by my temerity.

I was then a lad of barely fifteen years of age, and the circumstances were as follows.

I was stationed for a few months at Penang, that delightful little spot in the Straits of Malacca, where the climate is the finest in the whole Eastern Archipelago, the people the most hospitable and friendly, the fruits the most delicious, the flowers the most fragrant, and the birds the best warblers in the east. One day, a lawyer of the name of C—, who lived in the main street of Penang—the only street without a turning in the island, and which runs parallel with the harbour—had invited a few friends, chiefly officers of the native infantry corps stationed on the island, to partake of a quiet dinner at his house. Amongst the favoured few my name was included; accordingly, at the appointed hour, we assembled at the lawyer's table. In most parts of India, as well as in the Straits, it is usual for young men at a bachelors' party to be *sans façon*. The heat is so intense, sometimes, that even the thin white cambric

jackets are felt an inconvenience, and are accordingly doffed. This was precisely the case with us on the present occasion. Well, the dinner passed off, and the dessert came on. We sat waiting for the hour to arrive when the coolness of the evening would permit of our mounting our ponies, and taking a canter in the environs of George Town. The streets are at all times quiet in Penang, but more especially so between the hours of three and five o'clock, when people for the most part are enjoying a siesta.

On this occasion, however, while still seated at the table, we were suddenly startled by the very unusual sounds of firearms, and the distant hootings of a multitude. What could it be? We listened attentively; there was no mistake about the matter at all; the authors of the alarm, whoever they might be, were evidently nearing us, and that at a rapid rate. The firing was all the time kept up smartly, not in volleys, but it resembled the firing of the light infantry platoon. What could it be? was the question again repeated. At length we unanimously came to the conclusion that it must be an *émeute*, commenced most probably by the Malays and the Achenese, who were seeking some bloodthirsty revenge, and would doubtless, as we feared, massacre every one that crossed their path. At this moment a tremendous shout was raised at the top of the street in which the lawyer's house stood, accompanied by a more rapid firing than ever, while we could distinctly hear the bullets whizzing along the street. There was now no longer any doubt on our minds, and each one, seizing his hat or cap, made a rush down-stairs with the intention of retreating to the seaside; there, if possible, to secure a boat; or, if not, to swim off to the shipping for refuge. Many instances had lately occurred of vindictive Malays running a muck; that is to say, after having committed a murder, rendered callous by the certainty of death, and urged on by a thirst for blood, they arm themselves with a kreese, and rush up and down the streets, wounding every one who comes in their

way, until they are either shot or arrested. Besides this, a month had barely elapsed since some Malay convicts, transported to Ceylon, had risen against the crew and massacred them in the most barbarous manner. With these facts in our memory, no wonder that we were alarmed, as we too well knew that we had but little mercy to expect at their hands ; while, from the circumstance of their having arrived at this point of the island, it was evident that they must have traversed the military quarters, and consequently that they had in all probability massacred every European and native soldier. There was yet the little fort with the European artillery, and the shipping in the roads, which, provided our supposition was correct, afforded the only chances of escape. We had every hope of reaching shelter, however, as the assailants were approaching from a contrary direction. Down we rushed, therefore, half-a-dozen steps at a time ; the passage and then the door were speedily cleared, and we found ourselves in the open street. A momentary gaze in the direction of the crowd confirmed our previous suspicion, and balls came whizzing by in most unpleasant proximity to our persons.

At the instant I was about to turn, and take to my heels for the sea, I witnessed a most extraordinary phenomenon. A fat old Chinaman, who to all appearance was flying like ourselves from the vengeance of the marauders, suddenly took a most astonishing leap into the air, and disappeared over the wall of a neighbouring court-yard. Before I had time to conjecture how this sudden display of agility was effected, I had sufficient motives to put my own to the test ; for, not two yards in front of me, and evidently having singled me out as a capital target, there came tearing down at full speed a huge mad buffalo, equal in height and strength of limb to any bison I had ever met with in the Wynard Jungle. There was the fire of anger and madness in his eye, and his mouth was covered with foam and blood. I could almost feel the heat of his

hard breathing as I turned precipitately with terror and fled for my life. If ever fear lent wings to human feet, mine must have been decorated with as many as ever gave speed to a Mercury. I dared not look behind, but still I heard and felt the infuriated thing, and every instant expected to feel his sharp-pointed horns piercing my back and lungs. From my friend's house it was barely three hundred yards to the jetty; but then I had to turn to my right, and so doing the buffalo would most indubitably have doubled upon and caught me in the very act of turning. This I saw at a moment's glance, and consequently there was nothing left for me but to make straight for the fort, which was not more than four hundred yards from the jetty. Immediately before me was a species of railing, which fenced off an exercise ground for the artillery, and was of sufficient height to prevent donkeys and cows from leaping over. This fence was made of posts planted into the ground at regular distances, through which a stout rope was passed. Had I not been so hotly pressed, I could easily have stooped under the rope and so have escaped; but that was now out of the question: my life depended upon the jump, and no *acrobat* in the streets of London ever more astonished the multitude than I did myself on this occasion, by the tremendous spring I took. I alighted safely on the other side, but, without pausing a moment, renewed my flight towards the sentry at the fort-gate, who, seeing my danger, was rushing forward to meet me.

All this time, it must be remembered, the people never ceased firing at the infuriated animal, who was snorting and roaring under the pain of not less than twenty bullet wounds, as I afterwards discovered. How I escaped being shot myself, or at least wounded, is even more wonderful than my outstripping the buffalo in swiftness. I can only remember my escape with astonishment and with gratitude. Still I ran on, till at last I missed the sound of the pursuer, and, glancing hastily over my shoulder, had the unspeakable satis-

faction of beholding the buffalo charging at an empty carriage which was standing near the jetty points, and whose panels he smashed in such a manner as made my heart tremble, when I thought what my ribs would have suffered from his horns. It would seem that the buffalo most valiantly made the leap, determined to have a push at me at any rate; but his strength was too much exhausted from loss of blood, and this, in addition to his own weighty bulk, disabled him from clearing the barrier, so that he fell backwards only to rise again with freshly maddened fury, and charge in an opposite direction.

There were at this time several ladies and children collected at the jetty—the usual rendezvous of an evening; and it may be readily conceived with what a thrill of terror they beheld this exploit, and how, with screams and trembling, they rushed into boats and got rowed out into the bay; after this the buffalo changed his course, and charged, as I have said, the palanquin carriage. The concourse had now hemmed the maddened brute completely in; wherever he made a charge, he was rebuffed at the point of the bayonet, or received another ball into his perforated body. At last, as a final and desperate resource, and determined not to give in to his numberless tormentors, the noble but infuriated animal plunged into the sea, and struck out for the opposite shore of Province Wellesley. Here he was followed by boats and quickly dispatched; and when they towed the carcass on shore again, it was marvellous to see what tenacity the brute had displayed, with bullets lodged in parts which in other animals would have been fatal. Of course, my friends were delighted to shake hands with me again, and to compliment me on the prodigy of valour and presence of mind which I displayed in running away from a rabid animal; and of course, also, my scamper with the buffalo became a matter of a nine days' wonder, and the theme of many jokes—so closely does the serious sometimes border on the

ludicrous—among the small but hospitable and sociable community of Penang. I was struck, on reflection afterwards, with the sudden manner in which the danger had arisen. Human affairs, indeed, I have noticed in my passage through life, are so ordered, that in the most unexpected moments perils arise; a constitution of nature, which seems intended to teach us how habitually we need the protection of providential aid, and how constant, therefore, ought to be our spirit of humble dependence on God and preparation for the future by a faithful reliance on the Saviour.

AN ADVENTURE IN THE LEVANT.

THE hero, or rather victim, of the following thrilling adventure was a fellow passenger of mine in my homeward-bound voyage, during the year 1850. A Greek by birth, though a Frenchman at heart, by education and naturalization, he disclosed to me a specimen of the atrocities sometimes perpetrated by a set of freebooters, in the guise and under the protection of their official positions as *gens-d'armes*, or police constables. Had he not been possessed of the very best certificates from gentlemen holding high rank in the French naval service, as also from the British consul-general on the coast of Barbary, testifying to his general good conduct, sobriety, and truthfulness, I might have been inclined to consider the whole affair as a fabrication designed to excite sympathy and compassion for his sufferings. But when, in addition to the certificates, I watched the face of the sun-burnt Athenian as it glowed with the feelings of indignation at the recital of the treatment he had received at the hands of his cowardly assailants; when I marked his strong frame quiver and wide chest heave with the various emotions of fear, pain, and anger; when I reflected

that, in recounting this sad page from his adventurous life, he was afresh opening deep heart wounds ; and when, finally, I remembered that he could not possibly hope to reap any benefit by exciting my interest and sympathy—all these circumstances combined served to convince me of the veracity of the tale.

It was a fine moonlight night when first this narrative of adventure was poured into my attentive ears, and never shall I forget the effect it produced upon the group of voyagers who were lingering on deck until long past the hour of midnight, loth, like myself, to quit the cool and pleasant deck, and all the glories of a Mediterranean moon-lit sea, for the close and uncongenial berths allotted to us in the cabin. We could just see Malta lighthouse far away on the larboard bow ; and the vessel was dashing through the water at a rate that gave us fair hopes of a quick and pleasant passage to dear old England, from whose shores some of us had been absent for many long years. We were sitting upon the hen-coops, or upon the best available seat that offered itself, recounting such adventures and describing such scenes as our long residence in the east had subjected us to ; or else, taking happy mental glimpses of home and long absent friends, with whom we hoped speedily again to hold familiar converse. Gradually the conversation began to flag, when it was put to the vote and unanimously carried, that each one of our party should relate some incident of his life and travels. In course of time it came to the turn of the Greek, who, after considerable hesitation, recounted to us the following passage in his history, which appeared to me to present a striking illustration of the disorganized state of society in many parts of the east.

I am, he commenced, a native of Greece. Whilst yet a child, my parents emigrated to France, and, thanks to their kind care and good education, I was at the age of eighteen a civilized European in manners and morals, and a Protestant by creed. I

could distinctly discern the many foibles of my poor, illiterate, but crafty countrymen. At the same time that I could not but pity their defects and errors, I shunned their society, considering them too often devoid of principle, and so wily in their every undertaking, thought, word, and deed, as to prove dangerous companions or associates, and seldom to be trusted with a secret or a dollar. In 1835 I entered the French service, and joined a war steamer, commanded by a post-captain in the French navy, with whom I remained during a period of ten years, and whose testimonials as to my services and character are a sufficient passport for me to work my way in any part of civilized Europe. The kindness and unaffected dignity of this brave and open-hearted old sailor are too well known to demand any comment from me. There are many of his own countrymen, and not a few English, who have directly or indirectly been brought in contact with him on business matters, or in the more agreeable capacity of guests, passengers, or subordinate officers; and I may safely assert, that none ever quitted his presence without a conviction of their having been in the society of a perfect gentleman, a gallant and lenient yet strict officer, and a most sincere friend.

In the month of December, 18—, the steamer chanced to be lying at anchor in a port in the Levant; and having at that time a sister living at the city adjacent, who was married to a lieutenant in the Greek artillery, to her house it was my custom to repair on all *liberty days*, or on other occasions when the day's work was over and I could obtain permission to leave the vessel for a few hours in the evening. I seldom slept on shore, for somehow or other I never fancied myself at home or felt at ease except when I was in my own snug little cabin on board, and my night's repose was never sounder than when lulled to sleep by the gentle lullaby of the rippling waves and the music of the Mediterranean breeze. No man could have felt happier than I did at the time I am now

speaking of, none being apparently so secure from trouble or misfortune. I had amassed a small sum of money, which I felt a satisfaction in knowing had been accumulated honestly, by dint of perseverance and indefatigable labour. My father had been many years dead, and my poor mother and a younger brother and sister were entirely dependent upon my exertions for support. Happily I was in a position to place these two latter under the care of a worthy Protestant divine, my mother being unwilling to intrust them to the teachers of a Roman Catholic seminary.

Such were the comfortable circumstances by which I was surrounded when the incident I am about to relate occurred. How terrible its effects have been may be clearly traced by the symbols of premature old age which I carry about my person. (Here the narrator paused, and, lifting his hat off his head, displayed to view the many gray hairs that were thickly mingling with his originally raven locks.)

I consider, he continued, resuming the thread of his narrative, that to the terrible incident in question I owe the abbreviation of my life by full fifteen years; for I have never since, in health or strength, been the man I was before the eventful night of which I am about to speak—a night which taught me the uncertainty of the best arranged human plans and the contingencies to which they are constantly exposed.

It was late one evening in December that I obtained leave of absence from the officer of the watch, purposing to visit the shore for a few hours, and promising to be on board again before midnight at the latest. I little thought, on quitting the ship's side, that I should be compelled that night, for the first time in my life, to break my word. It happened to be the eve of St. Nicholas—a day celebrated as a festival by the members of the Greek church, and more particularly by such amongst her inhabitants as chanced to be named after that saint, and that claimed him as their patron.

Amongst these latter was my brother-in-law; and as I knew that on the morrow I could not with any propriety ask leave to spend the day on shore, I thought I would go up to his house for a few hours that evening, carrying with me a *souvenir*, in the shape of a richly mounted Turkish pipe that I had purposely brought with me from Constantinople. This I knew would prove an acceptable gift, as he was unhappily an inveterate smoker.

I may here state that the town to which I was bound was situated at a distance of nearly an hour's walk from the landing place, and the road leads over a desolate country, with no houses or other buildings save two coffee shops, which serve as miserable and unsafe half-way houses for the traveller: besides these, there is a still more miserable shed allotted to the sentry, who is nominally placed there to protect the highway, and be a safeguard to the stranger from the assaults and mal-treatment of robbers and assassins—a class of men always more or less abundant in these semi-civilized regions.

I remained later than usual at my sister's house that evening, for the weather had suddenly set in boisterous and chilly, with frequent squalls of hail, thunder, and lightning, so that I had deferred my departure to the very last moment, hoping that the weather might clear up again. It was not till some minutes past eleven that I quitted my sister's house, despite her tears and remonstrances; for I was determined, if possible, to be punctual to my promise. Well wrapped up in great coats and comforters, with nothing but a small rattan switch in my hand, I accordingly started for the seaside, and walked as briskly as I could towards the point of embarkation. The night was intensely dark, so much so that I could barely see a yard before me, and the wind howled mournfully over the waste; but the pathway having long been familiar to my footsteps, I could have almost picked my way blindfolded. The cold, bleak, cutting blast came in fitful gusts over the deserted

country ; but the very inclemency of the weather was a source of consolation to me, for I imagined that no banditti would expose themselves to that night's wet and cold, when the chances of booty must have been small indeed, few liking to quit the protection of their comfortable roofs and warm firesides.

I neither met nor saw any one until I had arrived almost within hail of the half-way houses before alluded to : then, for the first time, through the gloom that surrounded me I discerned the forms of several closely muffled figures, moving apparently in the same direction as myself, and whom I supposed to be captains or mates of some of the merchant vessels in the harbour, who for the sake of better security were keeping together till they should reach their respective boats. I immediately availed myself of such a favourable convoy, and, quickening my pace, was soon alongside of the strangers. After exchanging salutations and commenting on the wretched state of the weather, I inquired if their destination was the same as mine, and was answered in the affirmative. As we proceeded onwards, I had time to take a casual glance at the features and dress of my companions : what little I saw at once convinced me that I had fallen into very suspicious company ; and if the slightest doubt remained as to their real character, this was speedily removed by their unblushing demands to be recompensed for the trouble they would incur in keeping me company, while at the same time they kept edging up and hemming me in on all sides, either with the intention of rifling my person, or of unexpectedly inflicting a mortal stab, which might enable them to collect such few valuables as I had about me at their leisure, with the certainty of no clue remaining that might lead to their ultimate detection ; for "dead men tell no tales."

I could see that they were well armed, and knew that my only hope for succour was the close vicinity of the guard-house. Watching my opportunity, I made a rush for this place with such impe-

tuosity as nearly to upset the alarmed sentry, who was hanging indolently over a wood fire lit in a hole dug in the centre of the hovel.

"How now?" shouted the fierce Albanian, on recovering his self-possession: "what means all this noise and hubbub?"

A few words sufficed to acquaint the soldier with the real state of affairs; and as my suspicious companions had passed on, he readily agreed to my sharing the pleasant warmth of the fire with him. As the heat gradually penetrated my many overcoats, I was glad to strip off my great coat and hang it on a nail in the wall.

The Albanian spoke Greek as fluently as myself, and entered into conversation freely: he had a sorry tale of want and trouble to recount. The government never paid, though it subjected him, he said, to all the arduous duties of a serf. The rations of himself and companions were insufficient, and what a dog would barely deign to partake of; and as for the meagre cup of wine served out to them, it was more fit to be classed as exceedingly bad vinegar than anything he could compare it to; and then the Albanian threw out unmistakable hints as to the excellence of the wine sold at the coffee shops hard by, lamenting his poverty, which prevented his enabling him to taste and judge for himself. Upon hearing this, I indiscreetly offered to treat him; and leaving his musket to take care of itself, he conducted me into the nearest of the two *cafés*, on entering which I discovered that there were a non-commissioned officer and three privates seated there, drinking and gambling. All were Albanians save the officer, who, however, seemed well versed in their language, and they all spoke Turkish fluently. Unhappily for myself, I was utterly ignorant of both the Albanian and Turkish tongues. In treating the soldier to wine, according to Levantine etiquette I ordered cups to be served all round to his friends and acquaintances. I drank none myself, but merely

sipped it out of compliment to those present. The change of atmosphere from the stifling little hovel I had just quitted became very soon perceptible, and then, for the first time, I remembered having forgotten my great coat. I ran over to fetch it, and on my way back hailed a species of van that was passing, and begged the driver to wait a few moments whilst I just stepped in and paid my reckoning.

After settling, and pocketing the change, I turned with the intention of hastening out to the van, when to my astonishment and indignation the officer arrested my progress, and with drawn sabre in hand stood in the door-way and ordered the van to drive off immediately. I was perfectly paralysed. He told me, with assumed sternness, that I had been recognised as a notorious robber and brigand, who had long baffled pursuit, and that I only exchanged that coffee shop for a dungeon and the galleys for life. It was in vain for me to expostulate; menaces and entreaties were equally futile, as were the many references I gave to some of the best known and most respected residents of the adjacent town. His only reply was, that such was always the language of bad characters. He now ordered two of his men to secure me, by tying my hands together with a bit of strong cordage. I was forced to submit tamely to this painful operation; and the moment that I was rendered inoffensive, the miscreant seized the scabbard of his sword, and beat me about the head and shoulders in a most unmerciful manner. The soldier I had first met with interfered on my behalf, but he was speedily silenced by his chief, and sent back to his duty in the guard-house.

How my brain did reel, and my whole frame quiver with anguish, as I retreated into a corner of the room, and strained every muscle in my efforts to disentangle my hands. Sick and faint at heart, I thought of the long weary hours of night, the cold damp of the prison, and the frost and sleet of the season, but I made

secret resolutions to keep up my circulation by incessant movement; while the thoughts of the morrow, and the pleasant faces of friends coming to the rescue, cheered me even in this misery. At the same time I lifted up my heart in prayer to Him whose mercy never faileth, whose all-seeing eye was my only witness, and whose guardianship could save me when no man was nigh to help me.

The officer and his guards, assisted by the inhuman coffee shop keeper, held long and earnest counsel together in a language of which I was utterly ignorant. Meanwhile, as they kept on drinking, hard words and harder blows were aimed at my unoffending person, and my pockets were ransacked of watch and money. Time crept on slowly and heavily, while I stood there, bruised and wounded, with the frosty wind chilling my veins, till I longed for the arrival of the hour when I should be marched off to prison, and be at least free of the loathsome proximity of my tormentors. At length the word of command was given. One Albanian preceded us with a lantern; the officer and an armed soldier marched on each side of me; and close behind me was the third Albanian, with a ready-cocked musket to fire at me if I offered the slightest resistance.

To my surprise, instead of marching towards the town, the party made a *détour* and came to the back of the larger of the coffee-houses; and there, at that still hour of the night, I watched one of them as with the lantern he groped about, evidently in search of something. At length he stopped and beckoned us to approach: as we advanced he unlocked a sort of concealed door, which when opened disclosed to my dismayed eyes a flight of steps descending into the bowels of the earth. Down these they forced me, and, as the last man descended, I heard the door close (as I then thought) upon me and the world for ever. I counted eight steps, and then we came to another door, which swung heavily on its hinges as the Albanian forced it open. This led into a stone vault, of about

12 feet square by 8 feet high. Opposite to the entrance door there was a second one, against which the man with the loaded musket was stationed, while the lantern-bearer guarded the door of entrance. I could no longer have any doubt as to my fate; but the love of life was never so dear to me as at that moment. Mastering my emotions as well as I could, I warned my assailants to be aware of what the consequences must be, so soon as I should be missed by my messmates and friends: I implored them to remember that I was the sole support of my family; in short, I used every description of entreaty and exhortation; but I might as well have spoken to the winds. The chief fell upon me, armed with a cudgel; and, had it not been for the protruding angles of the corner into which I had retreated, and the lowness of the room, both of which aided in warding off the blows, the consequences must have been fatal. Tired and exhausted, at length he let fall the club, and, seizing on the sentry's musket, took deliberate aim at my unprotected breast, and pulled the trigger. I heard the steel click, and then, for a few seconds, which appeared hours to me, all was darkness and delirium.

There was no report; the gun had missed fire: the last expiring spark of hope was rekindled. I glanced anxiously at the musket, and the flint was gone. Eagerly did they seek and grope about for it on the ground. At this moment I heard the vault open, and saw a fifth figure descend into the vault: he had evidently been watching against surprise, and, hearing the turmoil below cease, had imagined all over, and now came to claim his share of booty. The strength of Samson was upon me: with one mighty effort I disentangled my hands; with a bound I had gained the steps and dashed the lantern into atoms; another bound and I was in the open air. I stopped not to think or look behind, but fled on the wings of terror over that dark country in the darkest hour of night. I scaled garden walls, fell and was maimed, yet ran on still for my

life, for my enemies were on the track. It was four o'clock next morning when I reached the house of a friend ; and no sooner had I passed the threshold than I sank down and swooned away.

The rest is soon told. Bruised and maimed as I was, I early next day repaired to the French consul. He at first refused me an interview ; I persisted, however, and was at length shown into his bed-room. He chose to doubt my word. I told him that the French war steamer would soon settle that point. On this he thought better of it, and wrote to the commandant. The subterranean vault was examined, the guilty parties imprisoned, and the whole of my statements, together with the medical certificates given me, are to this day to be seen in the archives of the French embassy.

Such was the Greek's tale. In countries where officials are underpaid, there is a continual temptation to resort to secret or open plunder as a means of increasing their emoluments. I have given the incident as tending to show an English reader the advantages he enjoys in his country, compared with those where the official guardians of law and order are often the first to violate them.

MY ADVENTURE IN A PINE WOOD.

My last cruise was in new waters, and very cold waters, and on very important business. It was no less than in pursuit of Russians, with whom our country was then at war. We failed to catch them at Pietropaulovski, and we vainly chased them round the peninsula of Kamtschatka into the Sea of Okotsk ; and, as a forlorn hope, we rushed to the mouth of the Amoor River in pursuit of them.

It was well on in June, and yet the cold was intense ; and, as we

coasted along, we found the region still wearing its arctic vesture of fine white snow and olive-tinted ice. The service on which we were engaged was intensely interesting to all on board our ship, which was a steam sloop, in fine working order, prepared for any emergency, provided with machinery for cutting through polar obstructions, and having a Lancaster gun on her deck. The escape of our prey was a special hardship. Resolved to do something, we made for Aien, and, in spite of fog and frost, steered our course for the unknown shores of Saghalien.

Chinese chartography is in a very crude state, and, worse still, may be charged with a *soupçon* of humbugging. Having, therefore, no better guide, we took to the old rule of the three *l's*, and by "lead, latitude, and look-out," we proceeded on our anti-Muscovite expedition.

It was a regular play at "hide and seek," but without the cry of "day," or the pleasant hint of "hot and hotter," that enhances the interest in the true game. We saw no signs of the foe; no clue to lead us in our race. The entrance of a harbour, and the grand promise of shelter in the deeply indented shore, were welcome sights, as we turned in from open sea to search the waters that flow round the head of the long island of Saghalien and unite the Sea of Okotsk with the Gulf of Tartary.

My duties were in the civil department of the naval service, and I therefore enjoyed an amount of leisure not allowed to those employed in working the ship or watching for the Russians. A square inch of land is at any time more interesting to me than a thousand cubic miles of ocean, with all its treasures and beauties. I was longing for pedestrian exercise, even on an ice-float, when it was announced that, with next flowing tide, we were to enter a bay where the Russians were suspected to be secreted. It was an exciting anticipation, and had the good effect of warming us all up a little. The very idea of a run on shore promoted our circulation;

and it was intensely interesting to find ourselves surmounting a formidable sand-bar that protected the inlet, and not one of our squadron able to follow us. Alone, we dared the encounter, and we had it. We met the ships, but not the foe. It was a blunt, dull sort of triumph. There lay before us the enemy's vessels, abandoned to our mercy; nothing to fight with, no one to beat. We just paddled round them, wondering "how they got there," and by what art and tact they did that which our fleet was unable to accomplish.

By this time I was thoroughly tired of Russians, and all about them. We had got enough of their forsaken forts, and were weary of picking up mementoes of unresisted visits to their haunts. There was something more than disappointment attending all this useless business; it was sadly painful. The sight of homes deserted is more suggestive of tender memories to common men than "banquet halls" to poets; and any one who has done a campaign in an enemy's country, will bear witness that it inclines the feelings more to peace than war. Once, a cradle, bearing the still warm impression of a baby's form, gave me a strong parental twitch, and took all desire for "looting" out of my mind, for that time; and I could see that it considerably subdued the destructiveness of the very boldest of my companions.

But the incidents of our cruise are not my present subject; and I pass on to tell how we used our rare powers of penetrating, and managed to come to close quarters with the land, in a manner it was evidently quite unused to. Though led by no further traces of Russians, we entered many creeks and bays. One of these, in latitude 49° N., was of such magnitude, that we determined to explore it; and as no hydrographer that we knew of mentions it, we gave it the name of our hardy little steamer; and, as we passed the points of its headlands, we called the capes after each other, according as the honour of discovering was claimed. A land-locked basin bears

my patronymic; and I judge that my brother officers were gratified by similar connections. There was much interest, at least, in our labours. We were doing something, after all: this sort of work would record our names in the geographies, if not the histories of our children.

We anchored in a secure haven, between tracts of country in a perfectly primeval condition. On landing with a companion, we found the soil was still fast in icy bondage, though the short summer of the region was approaching rapidly. Our road was excessively slippery and dangerous. Often as we took one step forward, we glided back two, so our progress was something like circle sailing. We fetched several points east to make one north, and our motion would have been skating if it were not climbing. Sword canes did duty for leaping poles, and we ascended a declivitous beach, and arrived on a platform, from which we could view the interior of the country. As far as the eye could see all was thick wood.

"Glorious primeval forest!" exclaimed I, with suitable gesticulation. The sound passed so rapidly through the air, that my companion, at a distance of a hundred yards, turned round, as if I had a string to him and had pulled it.

"Who are you roaring at? I'm not deaf," said he, in a huffy tone.

The polar phenomena connected with acoustics were not unfamiliar to me. I had been in an atmosphere like this before; but it was my friend Duff's first realization of the curiosities of hearing in high latitudes. On shipboard they are not so perceptible, pneumatic forces having many deadening influences, arising from the combination of depressing circumstances. I do not remember that it is much remarked by sailors, though certainly we often notice the distinctness with which we hear noises, especially during night, on board.

We went on, walking briskly over a thick mat of vegetation, now crusted with ice; and a few steps brought us into a brushwood that was less subdued, and more rebellious against our aggressions. The energy necessary to penetrate these barriers is often the offspring of the irritating effect of cold on the system. A lazier fellow than Duff does not sleep in a hammock; yet he rose to the occasion this time, and it amazed me to see him take arms and legs against this sea of bushes, and by opposing rend them.

Once in for it, we gaily gave push for push, and bore all the rubs and scratches that awaited our endeavours on every side. Dog-rose thickets were struggled through, junipers grasped at, chrysanthemums waded into, and, among all these, we saw many little plants that we had known in childhood. Wood blossoms gleamed in the openings our feet made; and in the soundings, through vegetable deposits, of our depths in leaf mould and height over true soil, we saw some lovely forms, recognised as natives also of other lands, and seen before in far different circumstances. The Alpine plants of the colder temperate zone and sub-arctic growth were about our path abundantly, and it was pleasant to find them thriving and surviving in the rigours of a clime that must soon be borne by that all-enduring being, man.

"Dog-rose pie is very good. Is there anything to eat in rhododendrons?" inquired Duff, eagerly.

"Can't say: there's no knowing what our cook may get out of them; let us try him." We set to work, and buds as large as the biggest cauliflower in Covent Garden market were piled up. Valerian is not an agreeable potherb, but it is a very useful medicine, so I gathered a heap of it; and altogether we had a collection that would have loaded a costermonger's cart, though probably it would have tempted very few customers to forsake Brussels sprouts and curled greens.

Leaving our prizes to await our return, we proceeded on our walk,

and reached a point where the grace and beauty of the birches claimed special regard; a profusion of larches, willows, and azaleas adorned the skirt of the wood, but no tribe of shrubs claimed our attention so much as the spiral, darting, sky-aspiring birch. It thrust its slender stems before us everywhere, and yet it rose to an altitude quite surpassing any estimate I had ever formed of its pretensions.

All this time we could see our floating home, whenever we looked back; but, as we warmed to our exercise, and fell to admiring plants, shrubs, and trees, we gave over retrospection, and pressed forward.

Our stomachs told dinner hour, and Duff thought of unpacking his knapsack. I was so busy examining the trees, that the monitions of my appetite were in danger of being disregarded; and as I thought of splendid specimens of *Pinus larix*, *P. cembra*, *P. abies*, and various and sundry other wonders of coniferous growth, he babbled of "firewood," and condemned the whole plantation, as not comparable, in fuelish qualities, to the package of charcoal he had brought in his portable stove.

The most advanced pioneer in the march of discovery does not get out of the rank of the appliances of modern science. We sat down to a snug little dinner. We had very accurately apportioned our provisions to our wants; there remained no fragments; and this was a source of regret, as we were anxious to cultivate the acquaintance of monkey-like squirrels, of species unknown to us, that were coming about us in rather numerous variety. Squirrels, martens, and foxes were very plentiful in the neighbourhood, and the presence of a few bears might be suspected.

The overhanging branches teemed with life. Little ugly animals, like rats, were running up and down, and over and across, and their movements were very exciting; one could not help expecting them to mistake a person for a tree: but this did not

happen ; and, to our surprise, they did not run up our legs or dart over our shoulders. The squirrels were highly amusing, leaping, and climbing, and exhibiting their queer shapes and figures. Thus occupied, we scarcely noticed that the evening was closing, although it was time to think of returning to our ship.

Duff had undertaken to mark trees as we came on, and I had left it to him to do, occupying my mind entirely in observation. To him, therefore, fell the duty of finding the way home ; and, to my consternation and his own, he professed utter incompetence to perform it. We were bad backwoodsmen, could not follow our own trail, nor hold on to the least clue to help us to retrace our path.

Both of us had forgotten our pocket compasses ; and we felt truly disconsolate, as we withdrew our respective hands from a vain search for them in their usual places.

The spot where we stood was closely embowered in pine boughs. Between the interlaced tracery of the innumerable branches came glimpses of fading light, and obscurity enveloped our minds and persons. Neither of us could tell, for the life of us, from which point we had entered the seclusion, and what opening we should take to get out of it.

"We came in by those trees with the rusty arms sticking out there," was Duff's opinion, while I was as positive that these faced me as I arrived through an opposite aperture.

Our contradiction was strangely amicable ; we were each so anxious to prove the other right, that we accepted any evidence as better than our own memory, and, to arrive at certainty, pursued every investigation suggested by any idea that crossed either of our minds.

Round every tree we sought for "our mark ;" and, so confusingly similar were the whole lot, that we found it impossible to decide where our labour begun or ended.

In this state of perplexity we adopted every expedient to raise a human sound above the din of vocalization that increased as darkness thickened. We called, shouted, hallooed, roared, screamed, bawled, yelled, and produced oral effects that would have terrified every rational hearer. Though, at the time, they seemed only ordinary efforts of nature to obtain the help of fellow creatures, the memory of them is yet lingering somewhere in the ear; and, whenever I recall it, my teeth are set on edge at the thought of the sound.

The foliage over us grew horribly dense. It was shutting down like a close cover. We felt at the bottom of a depth. An idea arose that we might reach the surface by using our mast-heading powers, and, going up a tree, to try to look a-head. I was the first to mount, and the climbing was unparalleled in my experience, as boy or man.

Shoving my shoulders through a tangled web of pines, I got a view of the world, in that locality, as it lay under the strange-looking heavens that encircle the northern parts of our earth. The sky over our happy England is a very different thing from the expanse that met my gaze as I emerged from my leafy bath. But it was not above there I was seeking for help; it was for anything that I could find beneath it to rest my hopes of home on, that I eagerly used my straining vision.

About me on every side, far as eye could reach, stretched a vast, dull, unbroken, monotonous, slightly undulating, but immovably still, region of thick wood! A world of trees! No sea! No ship! No hope!

I came down by my gravity, figuratively and literally. I forget the particulars of my descent, though my person and clothing retained the marks thereof for some time; but the remembrance of the heavy heart which sank me to zero, will never leave me. I stood again beside my poor companion. Again we paused, and,

after silent meditation, it seemed that we both arrived at the same conclusion, in the same length of time; and the same words burst simultaneously from both our lips.

"We're done for!" was our spoken sentiment at last; and we then confessed that, from the moment that we discovered our error about the tree marks, we had been under that impression.

We were not single men. I believe that, at that moment, we should have been happier if we had. It was of our wives and little ones we thought, as our doom dawned on us, and about them we groaned, as the fate we dreaded seemed sealed against us.

We separated, instinctively, tacitly.

I withdrew round a tree trunk, and, leaning my head against its well clothed side, felt my brain swim, and an indescribable sensation come over me. I felt as if I must cry. No consciousness of how I vented my emotions remains with me. Never since, or before, has such a commotion occurred in my soul, or disturbed the functions of my mortal frame. I have been in the heat of action, without swerving a nerve. I have sailed in storms that threatened awful death; but the placid misery of that moment is unique in my life, and I trust that the gloomy shadow that heralds the coming of the king of terrors will never again bring me such horror. My present trouble was soon lost in thoughts of home, and of eternity. . . . Gradually, unconsciousness intervened.

The loud boom of a gun rang the leafy canopy of our living tomb. I awoke and stood upon my feet. Where? How? What?

Every demonstration that had or had not sense in it, came rushing from the two pair of lips that lately were so speechless. We embraced each other violently, and were for some minutes as incompetent from joy as we had been from fear.

Another gun!—and yet another! and oh, how close! At our right side, undoubtedly! Manfully we dashed through the thicket,

and a few powerful pushes got us out of it ; and there we saw our own old brine, offering a friendlier home than the earth we had coveted so earnestly.

About a mile to westward sat our smiling vessel, waving us to a warm shelter, with the tongue by which she tells her will to the enemy, her want to the friend, and declares her respect for her ruler.

It was quickly perceptible that my mast-head experience was defective. I had blundered egregiously in taking my bearings from the tree top. The inlet was a hollow, and I had forgotten to estimate it as a sunk fence in the landscape. There it was, under our lee, near enough to reach in half an hour, even with all our impediments.

Duff and I, in silent concord, cast a veil over the whole circumstance. We did not even speak of it to each other ; and from that day to this I have never told the sufferings of our adventure in the pine wood to even my most intimate friend.

REMINISCENCES OF THE YELLOW FEVER AT CARTHAGENA.

ABOUT the middle of the peninsular war, I obtained a commission in the military service of his majesty King George III., and was ordered to join the army under the command of Lord Wellington. It was a bright and exciting event for a youth of my temperament to find himself in that land of chivalry and romance—sunny Spain. Without dwelling on my sojourn in the delightful city of Cadiz, where I disembarked, suffice it to say that I was at length detached

to Carthagen, the once eminent seaport and naval arsenal on the coast of Murcia, in the Mediterranean.

At the period to which this narrative refers, there was an English garrison at Carthagen, the presence of which infused a little fresh life into a city formerly so celebrated for its safe and spacious harbour, grand arsenal, strong fortifications, beautiful edifices, and busy, prosperous population. Now, however, it was gloomy, and comparatively deserted. In the magnificent basin of the arsenal, formerly crowded with noble men-of-war, there was not a single ship; the capacious warehouses for naval stores were empty; grass was growing in the principal streets of the city; and the population, which in bygone times consisted chiefly of public functionaries connected with the dockyard, and the numerous artisans and people of all grades employed therein, together with a large number of merchants, tradesmen, and so forth, was reduced to a few remnants of the various grades and their families. The total destruction of the Spanish navy at the battle of Trafalgar, was a death-blow to the prosperity of Carthagen.

The arrival of a British force of about a thousand men was hailed with delight by the half-famished inhabitants. The supplies needed for the English garrison were extensive; our officers spent their money freely, and the gloomy city soon began to wear a brighter aspect. The few families of any standing who still remained, threw their doors open to receive our officers at their *tertulias*, or *conversaciones*, which do not entail any expense on the part of the hosts; and when the extent of the general privations became gradually known, measures were taken by command of the gallant general in command of the British forces, for giving relief in a way that could not wound the most sensitive minds. In this he was zealously seconded by the officers.

The English soon became especial favourites at Carthagen. The coffee houses and public promenades were well frequented;

parties were arranged to visit picturesque spots, either at the foot of the mountains in the vicinity, or in little sandy coves on the borders of the beauteous Mediterranean Sea. Sheltered from the scorching sun in cool grottoes, the chatty groups partook of the provisions they had brought with them, and returned in the calm refreshing evenings to the city; the ladies in small vehicles called *tartanas*, gaily painted, and covered with awnings of pure white canvas, adorned with borders and tassels of bright colours; while the gentlemen rode on horseback. How joyously we caracolled by the side of the *tartanas*, drawn by spirited handsome mules, excited by their jingling collar-bells, and filled with señoritas, accompanied by their parents or elderly relatives! How coquetishly the fans were shaken at us! And what a number of silly things we youngsters must have said and done! But life is a chequered scene; and we were soon to receive a solemn lesson of its uncertainties, and of the wisdom of being prepared in its brightest seasons for contact with the realities of another world.

In the midst of this delightful state of things, rumours arose that some cases of the epidemia—the yellow fever—had occurred in the city. We, the English, paid but little attention to these reports. Not so the Spaniards, however. The recollection of the frightful scourge, which was emphatically termed “the great epidemia,” a few years previously, was too vivid not to occasion the utmost alarm at the bare probability of its return; so that, in spite of every effort to conceal it, incipient panic was visible in almost every countenance.

Neither at that, or any other period of my life, have I had the slightest dread of infection or disease of any kind; and I did all I could to rally my Spanish friends out of their very natural apprehensions. At length, however, the hideous pest broke out with the utmost fury, carrying off daily large numbers of every class. All who could leave the place did so immediately; but those formed

a very small portion indeed of the helpless inhabitants. The British troops were all marched out of the city, and located either in the two commanding forts of Atalaya and Galeras, built on two lofty rocks commanding the harbour, or cantoned in miserable villages at some distance from the city walls.

General Ross, our gallant commander, soon fell a victim to his untiring efforts to secure the health of the English troops. I was quartered, with a brother officer, in a dilapidated hut in a half-ruined hamlet, near the foot of one of the rocky eminences just mentioned, and we made ourselves as happy as we could. Strict orders were given that neither officers nor men should enter the infected city; but I confess that more than once I managed to elude this regulation.

Never shall I forget the deadly aspect of the silent and nearly deserted streets. Almost all the shops were closed; and ever and anon I came opposite a house with the words "Aqui hay contagio"—"There is contagion here"—chalked on the closed street-door in large characters; and wan-looking men were to be seen creeping noiselessly along, carrying rude coffins or boxes, containing corpses, to be deposited in carts stationed at certain points for the conveyance of the dead to the cemetery, about a mile from the city.

After a time, my duties required that I should remove to a sort of hut—a goatherd's, I think, it must have formerly been—on the slope of a rugged hill, looking down upon the port. It consisted only of four plank walls, a crazy door, and one small unglazed window; the roof was slanting, also formed of planks. Before going there I had felt not quite myself, as to healthy sensations, but I thought little or nothing about it. Soon, however, I was severely attacked by the epidemia. The British medical officers attached to the hospital ship in the harbour paid me every attention in their power, almost worn out as they were by the incessant calls

upon their time and skill. I had a Portuguese servant, who had been with me some time. I do not think he had a hard master. He was a man of about thirty; swarthy, but good-looking enough, having a bushy head of hair, and immense whiskers, both quite black. My bed consisted of a canvas palliasse, stuffed with chopped straw, and a bolster of the same materials. The bedstead was a cot frame, standing upon four short legs. There was no flooring to the hut—the bare earth only; and very glad I was to get such quarters, quite good enough for any soldier, from a general to a drummer.

Well, I was very ill, though quite sensible, throughout the raging fever. I had an impression that I should not recover from the attack. One afternoon, when I was at the worst, my servant, who—no doubt fearing the contagion—had kept as much aloof from me as he could all the morning, vanished by the crazy door, and did not return for many hours. I was fearfully weak, and soon a deadly sickness came on—that *vomito negro*, or black vomit, which is considered to be, almost invariably, a fatal symptom. I contrived, with great difficulty, to get my head to the edge of the palliasse, but my face fell upon the dusty floor. I had no strength to raise myself. I thought I was dying, and I wished I could send a loving message to my dear mother in England. I felt indignant at the conduct of my servant, of whom I had taken every care when he had been ill not long before, in deserting me at so critical a moment: and I think this indignant feeling, under Providence, saved my life. It stimulated me, when, under other circumstances, I should have quietly sunk to death. That is the ordinary characteristic of the last moments of those who are seized with this dire malady.

Whilst in this state, I heard the frail door creak. Slowly, slowly, it opened; and, at last, the large hairy head of my servant protruded through the aperture; the great black eyes peering

inquisitively about the place. No doubt he thought I must be dead, and came to see what spoil he could get. I managed to make a beckoning motion; the creature advanced, and I bade him, in a feeble voice, to lift me up and lay me upon the palliasse. Then I got him to wash my lips and face, covered with saturated dust, after which I fell into a doze. How long it lasted I cannot say; but, on awaking, all I felt was extreme helplessness: no pain—no *nausée*.

Daily, but very slowly, I gained some strength, and I was eventually removed to the small village of Santa Lucia, on the edge of a little bay, or inlet at the foot of the harbour. I had a room on the ground floor of a small dwelling adjoining the road, leading, amongst other places, to the public cemetery. My window was protected by iron bars, as is the custom in Spain; and as soon as I could crawl about, I passed a good part of each day there, inhaling the invigorating sea air. The heat was intense. Few persons passed along the silent road. There was, however, one vehicle which regularly went to and fro twice a day—the dead-cart. It was drawn by a lean, sorry horse; and the driver was a sallow, unwholesome looking man, who always sat on one of the shafts, very often eating bread and garlic, as he drove slowly along towards the cemetery. The cart was a covered one, but the sides were formed of railings, through which the dead bodies, heaped upon each other, could be partially seen. Of course I tried to avoid being at the window when the cart passed by; but as it came at irregular hours, and by a turn in the road close by, the sickening sight sometimes came upon me unawares.

One day I witnessed a very curious scene from my barred window. It was a funeral procession. No doubt the defunct had been a person of some note, to be thus carried, alone, to his last earthly home. There was a Roman Catholic priest in his vestments, and a little boy shaking a small tinkling bell from time to

time. Then came the coffin, carried on men's shoulders; the procession being closed by six poor miserable men, clad in worn brown cloth cloaks. Each man carried a long, thick, lighted wax torch; and as the last passed near my window, he suddenly turned his back to the others, drew forth from under his cloak a large clasp-knife, with which he cut off about half a foot of the thick waxen torch, put it and the knife in his pocket; and then, holding the torch by the inside of his cloak, so as to render its curtailment imperceptible, he turned round again and gravely took his place as the last in the procession. All this was done in a few seconds. His roguery, ill-timed as it was, caused me at the moment to laugh heartily, which, no doubt, did me a world of good.

The last trick Antonio, my servant, played me, was to nearly starve my horse to death. I bought him, before I became ill, of a German officer, who had deserted from the French army, commanded by Marshal Soult. *Such* a horse! He was full sixteen hands high, had a grand head and neck, but a most extraordinarily hollow back. His forelegs were very good, but the hind ones unusually short—cow-like. His gait was therefore very singular. I, of course, often asked Antonio if he drew the forage ration, regularly fed, groomed, and took care of the horse, and how he was going on; to all of which questions he answered satisfactorily. When I felt strong enough to walk out, I ordered him to bring the horse to the door for my inspection. The stable was a good way off. After a long delay he appeared, leading a quadruped whose *genus* it would have puzzled the savans of the Zoological Gardens to decide upon. It looked to me something between a giraffe and a bear. It was covered with long matted hair, had a profuse dusty main and tail, and was rather dragged than led along, so weak and exhausted it was.

“What’s this?” cried I.

“El caballo, señor—the horse, sir.”

‘Caballo!’ said I.

‘¿Si, señor—*your* horse.’

The poor animal turned its languid eyes towards me, as much as to say, “You don’t know me, master, but I do *you*. Do give me something to eat.”

I at once saw how matters stood. Antonio had drawn the forage, and had sold the greater portion for his own benefit; moreover, he had never groomed the poor animal, whose coat had grown till, as I said before, it looked more like that of a bear, or a shaggy dog. The dishonesty and cruelty of the man disgusted me, and I threatened to hand him over to the provost marshal for severe punishment. I instantly made him feed the horse, and afterwards groom him before my own eyes, and ordered him to do so daily. When the poor animal had had a moderate feed, and a due complement of fresh water, and the currycomb had been properly used, he turned his head towards me again, as though he would have said, “Thank you, master: I shall soon be able to carry you cheerily.”

At length the fearful malady wore itself out; and, ere long, I returned to Cadiz for the benefit of my health, which soon became quite re-established.

A NIGHT IN TASMANIA.

ALMOST immediately under our feet, on the other side of the world, and only separated from the great continent of New Holland by a narrow strait, is a British settlement, that, with many claims to the attention of Englishmen, has hitherto excited but little of it, and which appears to be now entirely lost in the ruddy gleam of gold that, with increasing brightness, shines from its sister colonies.

Van Diemen's Land, or, to give the island its softer and more modern name, Tasmania, is the most southern land inhabited by Europeans. From Tasman's Head to the Antarctic Pole stretches a dreary waste of ocean, in which adventurous voyagers have vainly sought for habitable land; finding only volcanic islands bedded in enormous ice-fields, their open craters rising in bleak sterility above the green continents of frozen water, and belching forth even here great masses of red-hot scorïæ, streams of molten lava, columns of lurid flame, and clouds of black and heavy smoke. Sir James Ross describes the scene presented by this strange region of contrasted frost and fire as unequalled in its rugged desolation, and surpassing all conception in its gloomy grandeur and its terrible sublimity.

But Tasmania, the voyager's last resting place before encountering these terrific solitudes, has little in common with them in scenery and appearance. The first view of the island is, indeed, unprepossessing, for its cliffs are high and rugged, and along its coasts are scattered numerous small islets, barren rocks rising in fantastic shapes from the green sea that boils around them, climbing their dark pinnacles in lines of snowy foam and glittering spray. But a nearer view dispels the idea of sterility, and conveys to the approaching stranger a more truthful notion of the fertile land that spreads in graceful undulations from the sea. As his vessel sails across Storm Bay, and, leaving the lofty lighthouse on Bruné Island to the right, enters D'Entrecasteaux Channel, passing the fatal Acteon rocks, a succession of magnificent scenery opens before him. On either hand rises a range of hills, clothed to the water's edge with noble trees; the shady foliage hiding the land, and spreading over every ridge, crowning the loftiest summits with its dark verdure. Recherché Bay, South Port, Port Espérance, and other minor harbours, form deep indentations on the western shore, and pierce the hills in long vistas of surpassing beauty, disclosing

in the distance other tiers of wood-crowned eminences, stretching away in wavy lines that end abruptly in some lofty snow-capped mountain, or stoop with gentle declination to some inland plain. The long island of Bruné forms the right bank of the channel, commencing at its entrance in a bold headland, that rises precipitously from the ocean, and continuing in a chain of hills that sinks and contracts to a flat and narrow isthmus in the middle of the island, but appears again as we approach its northern extremity. Along its edge lie several small green islets, each one the property of some lonely farmer; and on the main island cleared farms appear at intervals, and flocks of sheep and fields of waving corn give evidence of settlements and proofs of human toil.

Turning again to the left, there appears a wide bay forming the mouth of the river Huon, on the banks of which are several farms, though this part of the country is not thickly settled, the land being covered with heavy timber. At the entrance of the Huon is a singularly perforated rock, called Arch Island, standing like a solitary bridge, through which the waters race incessantly; its summit is covered with flocks of screaming gulls and solemn penguins; whilst high above it soars the pelican, stooping occasionally from his circling flight, and dropping with unerring aim upon the unsuspecting fish beneath him. A little higher, after passing Three-hut-point, the channel narrows, and a line of buoys marks the existence of some hidden reef or sand-bank. Above the entrance of Long Bay, which stretches away to the right, lies Green Island, a little spot presented to a woman by the government, as a reward for her heroic conduct in defending the hut which she occupied upon it against the attack of a gang of armed bushrangers. Nearly opposite to it is Oyster Cove, lately the residence of the remnant of the aboriginal inhabitants of Tasmania, once the fiercest and most warlike tribe of the south.

Their continual aggressions on the settlers, the terrible outrages

committed by them, and the equally savage retaliations of the whites, induced Sir George Arthur, at that time governor of the colony, to attempt the capture of the whole nation. The extraordinary talent and ability displayed by that gentleman in the general administration of his government has not sheltered him from the ridicule incurred by this impracticable scheme. He proposed to extend a line of men across the north end of the island, and, marching them towards the south, gradually drive the natives into a corner, where they might be surrounded and eventually made prisoners. Every man in the colony was called out, even including the convicts; and the force thus raised was divided into companies of ten, with a captain to each. Great preparations were made, and immense expense incurred; every precaution, indeed, was taken that the military experience of the governor and the many old officers in the colony could suggest, to ensure the success of the expedition. The settlers began to congratulate themselves on the probability of their getting rid of their vindictive and much-dreaded neighbours, and willingly offered their services to the government. But the mountain brought forth a mouse. After a month's marching through the bush, in an almost impassable country, over the tops of mountains, across rivers and deep gulleys, through forests rendered impervious by thick tangled undergrowth and matted jungle, the line of valorous heroes closed in upon the enemy, and discovered, to their astonishment and dismay, that they had succeeded in capturing and taking prisoner—one poor black fellow! The cunning of the savage had fairly outwitted the wisdom of the white man; and "Were you out in the line?" is still a standing joke against an old settler.

But that which the united force of the whole colony was unable to effect, one man successfully accomplished. A gentleman who was familiar with the habits and language of the natives of Tasmania volunteered to effect, unaided, the peaceable capture of

every native in the colony. His offer was eagerly accepted by the government, and he immediately commenced his mission. He soon succeeded in persuading a party of the black fellows to accompany him to town, where they were lodged for safe custody in gaol; and the number of prisoners was increased by every fresh expedition of the same individual, until the country was thoroughly cleared of its ancient occupants. An isolated building at the top of Elizabeth-street, in Hobart Town, was at first appropriated to their use, and here for a short time they were carefully guarded; but it was found necessary to remove them from the neighbourhood of the town, and they were ultimately conveyed to Flinder's Island, in Bass Straits, where a regular establishment was formed for their accommodation.

The poor children of the forest, though they pined at first in their island prison for that perfect freedom which in their own wild hills they had enjoyed, soon became accustomed to their position, and gradually adopted the costume and the habits of their warders, though still retaining many of their old barbarous customs. Happily, the island abounded in the game which they had been used to pursue in their own country, and this in some measure consoled them for their exile; and no doubt the opportunity of obtaining food without exertion would be in exact accordance with their taste for indolence. But their numbers rapidly decreased, and at length became so small, that it was thought unnecessary to keep up the expensive establishment on Flinder's Island; and the remnant of the tribe was removed to Oyster Cove.

A few more years will witness the extinction of the race, and then another, though a nameless nation, may be added to the long list of those that have been swept away by that great human wave, which, rising in one little island, has poured across earth's ocean barriers, bearing on its crest the ripened fruits of centuries of toil and thought; prolific seeds, from which have sprung new saplings

striking their clinging roots deep in the virgin soil, and lifting their majestic heads towards heaven; whilst their wide branches spread across whole continents, and drop in distant islands new and living fruit, the germs of future and still greater nations.

But our ship is passing rapidly up the narrow channel, opening out on either side new bays and pretty inlets. Crossing the mouth of North-west Bay, we pass beneath Mount Lewis, a high hill, on which is a semaphore, one of a line of telegraphs erected between Hobart Town and Port Arthur, and which has already signalled to town notice of our arrival. We now round the northern extremity of Bruné Island, and enter the noble river Derwent, or rather the arm of the sea into which the Derwent falls at Hobart Town. In a few minutes we obtain the first view of the town, and a scene of extraordinary beauty spreads before us. The contracted channel appears to expand into a magnificent lake, the narrow outlet closing behind us, and the wider entrance by Storm Bay hidden for a moment by the intervening land. Close to us, starting abruptly from the shore, is a range of low hills, thickly wooded, gradually increasing in height as it extends inland, until, rising to the top of Mount Nelson, the chain links the great admiral's namesake to a huge frowning mountain, bearing the noble name of Wellington. Apparently at the foot of Mount Wellington, though in reality four miles from it, stands the capital of the island, built on gently rising ground, at the head of a beautiful inlet of the river—Sullivan's Cove. The upper part of the town seems to creep into the forest, and to melt away among the trees; the hill on which it stands still rising above the houses, until it mingles with the distant ranges that sweep in majestic curves from the crest of the towering mountain. Pretty villas are seen nestling among the trees; and occasional gaps in the thick timber disclose green fields, relieving with their verdure the darker hues of the sombre forest.

In the cove are many ships at anchor, and alongside the wharfs others are discharging or receiving cargo. On a small green eminence at the extremity of a point of land that stretches from the town towards the sea is the battery; and from hence a line of large warehouses skirts the wharf, joined at right angles by a range of lofty stone-fronted buildings, facing directly down the river, and constituting the custom-house, post-office, etc. To the right of these, on a small hill, the slope of which has been cut away to form a wharf, stands the governor's house, hidden by a profusion of trees and shrubs. Beneath are the commissariat stores and other buildings, and beyond them the government domain terminates abruptly in a bare grassy point, past which the river, narrowed to half its previous width, flows gently on. From hence the eye, resting for a moment on Mount Direction, a very singular and precipitous hill, seen in the distance, looks again on new ranges of hills, rising above each other in tiers, all covered by the same evergreen mantle, or sweeping to the sea in deep cultivated valleys, that end in pretty bays embroidered round by narrow strips of pebbly beach.

As the ship drops her anchor in the clear waters of the cove, numerous boats crowd round her, offering their services to convey the passengers ashore. The stranger on landing is pleasantly disappointed at discovering that, after a voyage of nearly sixteen thousand miles, he has suddenly stepped into a pretty English country town, instead of the wild savage wilderness in which he half expected to be thrown. The wide macadamised streets, crossing each other at right angles, extend the whole length and breadth of the town; some of them continuing their course into the bush beyond it. The shops, with their plate-glass windows, and display of British manufactures; the English mode of dress, and happy home-made faces; the London-built carriages and brewers' drays; the staring placards, with great letters and many notes of admiration, announcing "tremendous sacrifices" and sales by auction;

bills of amusement, and missionary meetings—everything around him, speaks of home and English customs; and the occasional appearance of a verandah and a wooden house, or a glimpse of the distant hills, alone reminds him that he is a denizen of a new country, a wanderer in a strange land. Never was the oft-quoted saying of Count Strzelecki more fully verified: "Wherever the Englishman establishes himself, there does he reproduce his native country."

The climate of Tasmania, too, resembles in some measure that of England, though milder and more agreeable. It possesses all the beauties without the drawbacks of that of Australia,—the same genial temperature and clear atmosphere, without the winter deluges of rain, or the long droughts and parching winds of summer. The hilly nature of the country supplies numerous streams of pure water, and the soil of the valleys and the hill-sides is most fertile and productive. Every English fruit flourishes vigorously: the orchards and gardens scarcely differ in their products from those at home; the settlers grow only such crops as are common in the old country, and many of the older Tasmanian farms would bear comparison with some of the best in England; though, on the newer ones, the bare timber fences and unsightly blackened stumps of trees detract considerably from their beauty.

The spacious plains of Australia enable the colonists of that country to surpass the Tasmanians in wool-growing, though the hills of Van Diemen's Land afford pasture to thousands of sheep, and shelter for numerous herds of cattle; and in her breed of horses the island colony stands second only to England herself. Coal, freestone, and clay are plentiful, and timber adapted to ship and house-building is found in every part of the island; but it is on her agricultural capabilities that Tasmania chiefly rests her claim to notice, and from which she derives a title that has been happily bestowed upon her—"the granary of the South Seas."

With my recollections of the colony are associated an adventure in the wildest part of it; the remembrance of a night passed in a scene of which I still retain a most vivid impression. The story may not be uninteresting to the reader, and it will, perhaps, furnish a better idea of the unsettled districts of the country than any mere details could convey.

In the summer month of December, a few years ago, I had occasion, in company with an old bushman, to make an excursion to the Huon river, the communication between which and Hobart Town is usually by water, as the hilly and thickly timbered tract that separates them has hitherto prevented the formation of any road, other than a faint track marked by the occasional passage of travellers. As the place that we wished to reach lay higher up the Huon than the point at which this track joins it, we intended, by the aid of a pocket compass and the extensive experience of my companion in bush-travelling, to trace out a new route which would shorten the distance, and also carry us through a comparatively unexplored country. With this design we started from town fully equipped for our journey, which we expected to accomplish with ease in two days. As we anticipated, in the course of our journey, having occasion to kill some game, each carried a light fowling piece and its accompaniments, with the usual requisites for bush comfort. These consisted of two good opossum-skin rugs—the most valuable article that a bushman can possess—strapped to our shoulders, and containing a small supply of provisions, together with a tin pot for making tea, and a reserve of powder and shot. Broad leathern belts confined the loose blue flannel shirts that formed our upper garments, and light hats made from the leaves of the Australian cabbage palm shielded our heads from the rays of the sun.

Leaving the town, we were soon within the deep gorge that rises towards Mount Wellington, and at the entrance of which is situated

the Cascades Factory, a large building in which are incarcerated the most incorrigible of the female convicts. From this point the mountain rises to a height of four thousand feet, its sides covered with trees, and the ascent continually broken by the intervention of deep chasms and ravines, their rugged walls hidden beneath a tangled mass of most luxuriant vegetation. A tolerably good path has been formed to the summit of the mountain, and several ladies have made the ascent, amongst whom may be especially mentioned Lady Franklin, who penetrated into many of the wildest recesses of the island during the governorship of her gallant husband, upon whose fate so dark a shadow rests. But our road lay to the left of the mountain, over hills thickly sprinkled with beautiful wattle trees (*acacia*), covered with yellow flowers; and bushy honeysuckles (*banksia*), bearing pine-like cones; mingled with patches of forest or she-oaks (*casuarina*), trailing their long slender branches, from which droop weeping, threadlike tendrils instead of leaves. Beyond these hills rose a dark forest of huge gum trees (*eucalyptus*); and as the day declined, we entered a broad valley abounding with gigantic specimens of this great genus, the most common and yet the stateliest of all Australia's arborescent prodigies. Perhaps in no part of the world can this noble collection of forest giants be surpassed. One, that we roughly measured, was upwards of fifty feet in girth, and shot up, straight as an arrow, without a single break in the smooth tapering stem, to a height of more than a hundred feet. Here it threw out a number of huge branches, and then towered aloft, twisted and gnarled, covered with crooked boughs that cast a shade upon the topmost branches of tall trees; and fluttering with narrow leaves that turned their edges to the earth, and danced and trembled in the sunlight. The full altitude of this enormous tree must have been above two hundred feet, and many others grew around it of nearly equal dimensions.

Up from the valley, we went across another ridge of hills, and

there we saw, trickling through the hollow, the little stream beside which we meant to pass the night. Here the scene had new attractions. It was the perfection of quiet beauty. The day had been hot and sultry, and through the long avenue of hills we saw the sun droop in the west, without a single cloud to catch the reflection of his fading glory; whilst, as he fell, there came stealing from the sea the cool refreshing night breeze. The evening was one of those I have seen in no other country—so still and gentle was it, and free from the thousand plagues that spring into life with the fiery sunset of the tropics. The stream by which we encamped was overhung by the graceful sassafras and sombre light-wood; and numerous flowering shrubs fringed its green banks, spreading among the slender tea-trees that stood in groups, linked to each other by climbing plants, from which hung many crimson tassels and yellow bell-shaped flowers. Beyond stood the solitary native cherry tree, its thick dark foliage drooping in stringy clusters from the pendulous branches, and deepened almost to black in the increasing gloom. All around, too, the stunted fern trees threw out their majestic crowns of long feathery leaves, and stretched away into the forest until lost in the dense brushwood. From the midst of this towered the blue and yellow gums, the stringy bark, and other varieties of the eucalypti, their gigantic stems blackened by the bush fires, save where the new bark, bursting through in blended streaks of blue and white, gave to the old forest kings a ghostly likeness, heightened by the mournful waving of the long dark strips that are ever peeling from their trunks; for they follow the fashion of the country, where nature stands upon her head, and shed their bark instead of leaves.

Such was the beautiful scene around us. Little did we think of the peril to which in a few hours our lives were to be exposed; but this incident, and our providential deliverance from danger, must be reserved for our next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

THE beautiful scenery described in my last paper was almost thrown away upon us, for we were desperately hungry. A lighted match being applied to a heap of dry grass and twigs, we had soon a blazing fire, before which, in a few minutes, a brace of wattle birds, shot during the day, were cooking in most primitive fashion. Through each bird was thrust a long straight wand of tea-tree, sharpened at both ends, the other point being fixed obliquely in the ground, close to the red embers of the fire; and thus our game was quickly roasted in a style which, though it might slightly shock M. Soyer, rendered it a very acceptable addition to our homely supper. The tin pots, filled from the stream, served the double purpose of kettle and teapot; and tea being made, they easily supplied the want of cup and saucer—a whole tea equipage in one. Supper over, we collected a store of firewood, gathering the broken limbs that lay scattered round a fallen trunk; its huge bulk so thoroughly decayed, that through its centre sprang a cluster of young saplings. Out of the dead there came forth life. Another log on the fire, and then, with a stone or a tuft of kangaroo grass for a pillow, and our warm rugs wrapped closely round us, the blue and richly jewelled heavens our curtain, we slept more soundly than if couched in down, or, with Shakspeare's king,

“Than in the perfumed chambers of the great,
Under the canopies of costly state,
And lull'd with sounds of sweetest melody.”

But our sleep was roughly broken. I awoke with a dreamy sense of suffocation, and lay for a moment drowsily wondering what it meant, when suddenly a loud explosion started me to my feet, and a conviction of the truth instantly flashed upon me. Our fire,

though carefully placed at a distance from any dead timber, had ignited the dry grass, and the flame was rapidly spreading through the forest. It had already gained the spot where, at a short distance from our resting place, we had deposited the remnant of our provisions, and had reached the canister of powder, the explosion of which had happily aroused us. It was but just in time. The fire had commenced on the opposite side to that on which we lay, but it was swiftly gliding towards us, the calmness of the night allowing it to expand in every direction as from a centre; and the low brushwood, and dry branches of fallen trees, were already blazing and roaring most furiously. We turned instinctively to the creek, but it was a line of fire. The tea tree, and small bushes on its banks, had caught like match-wood, and the flame was running along them at a racing pace. To climb the hill behind us with such an enemy in chase was utterly impossible; and so, carrying only our guns, we started up the creek at full speed, as in that direction the fire seemed to make least headway, and we hoped to easily outstrip it, and then cross the stream in safety. For a few minutes we appeared to gain upon our fleet adversary, and were already turning towards an opening in the line of trees, when, seizing on a bunch of leafy shrubs, the flame shot past us; and, blazing up, caught the branches of an overhanging tree, spread in an instant across the narrow rivulet, and glanced like lightning through the vale beyond. Meantime, the belt of fire behind was widening up the hill, and pressing close upon us. Its hot breath scorched our cheeks, and the eddying smoke rolled round us in suffocating clouds; whilst long bright tongues of flame hissed through the leaves, and flashed along the ground, licking up the dry grass in their momentary passage. Half-blinded, and gasping for breath, the perspiration streaming from our brows, with terror and exertion we hurried on, scarcely knowing whither.

The line of fire upon the creek had rapidly preceded the broader

track that swept across the hill, and had already advanced considerably ahead of us, when a turn in the range revealed beyond the stream an open piece of ground stretching towards the foot of another hill, and only studded here and there by large solitary gum trees. With a simultaneous movement we dashed down the hill, the tufts of grass already burning beneath our feet, and bursting through the half-consumed but still blazing tea tree, at a single bound we passed the creek, and stood in safety on the patch of open ground. "Thank God!"—these were the first words we had uttered since our fearful waking; and we wept like children, as, with hands clasped together, we gazed on the terrible spectacle before us.

We still retained our guns; and I had in my pocket a flask of powder intended for use on the road, which had, happily for me, not been ignited in our passage through the mass of burning scrub; but our singed hair, scorched clothing, and shrivelled shot-belts, told how narrow had been our escape.

The spot on which we stood was free from undergrowth, and nearly denuded of grass, the scattered tussocks lying too far apart to be easily fired, and the smooth bark of the blue gum trees offering little hold to the flames. To retain our isolated position, and wait until the fire had spread beyond us, was evidently our safest course; and this we determined to adopt.

The night was light as noonday, though the sky was hidden by a heavy cloud of smoke that hung above the burning valley, and spread its dismal folds from hill to hill, like some huge funeral pall; the black and drooping edges reflecting here and there the lurid hues thrown from the flame-tinged centre. Far up the hill spread a great sea of fire—billows of flame heaving from every clump of brushwood; the foremost waves rippled along the grass like an advancing tide, with narrow streams of light shooting beyond them every moment, and then vanishing; whilst from the

scene rose such a roar as echoes from old ocean thundering in anger on the rocky barriers of some reef-bound coast. The flames flashed up the rough fibrous covering of the stringy bark like lightning, spreading to every bough, withering the leaves, and bursting out among the branches, until the huge trees stood like red-hot columns, bearing as their capitals great pyramids of flame. The close, smooth bark of other eucalypti, though scorched and shrivelled by the heat, seemed incombustible; but the long dead strips that fluttered round them burned most vividly, and twined about the blistering trunks in fiery tresses. Showers of sparks and flaming leaves filled the still air, and floated in the smoky canopy; whilst through the surf-like roll and ceaseless crackling there came at intervals a startling crash, the echoing death-groan with which some leafy monarch yielded to his fate, bowed his scorched head, and carrying with him hosts of forest courtiers who had grown beneath his shade, sank on the earth, that trembled at his fall. The flame had mounted rapidly up the loose bark of other trees, igniting the topmost branches, and then expiring on the trunk: and thus a mass of fire hung in mid-air, and spreading through the foliage around it raged as fiercely as that which glowed and roared below. Flights of parrots, dazzled by the glare, rose screaming from their perches, and dropped bewildered and half suffocated in the burning chaos.

As morning approached, the wind rose, and many a half-consumed tree fell before the sudden gusts that rushed with fitful violence from the deep hollows and distant valleys. At daybreak the fire had passed along the range, and when the sun peeped through the wind-gaps in the smoke, the scene had lost its terrible magnificence, and presented only marks of utter desolation and of mournful ruin. In place of the closely matted shrubs, the climbing flowers, the graceful ferns, and noble forest, there appeared a scathed and blackened prospect, from which all life had fled.

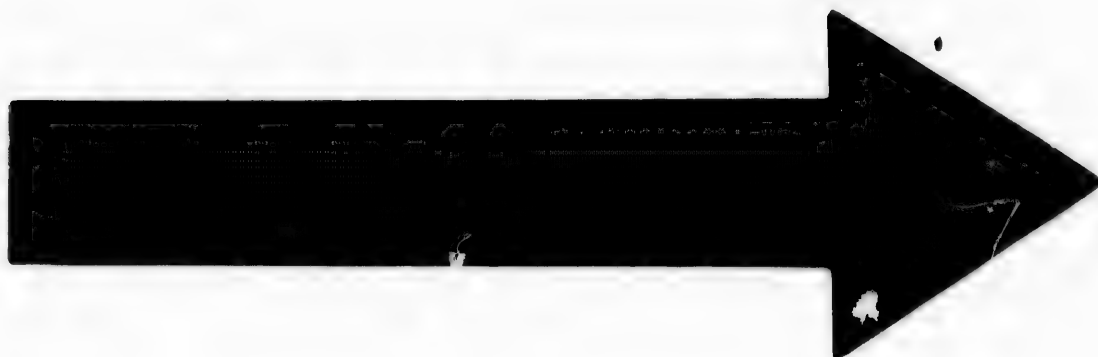
Upon the smoking earth long lines of fine white ashes marked the spot where some thick group of clinging shrubs had perished, or where the fallen stem of some tall sapling had been consumed. The trees, like great black skeletons, reared their gaunt limbs stripped of all covering; and round their trunks the fallen branches gathered, aiding the fire that slowly ate into their hearts. The little rivulet, choked by the fallen timber, rose in clouds of hissing steam as showers of burning fragments fell into its channel. The mass of vegetation that grew in wild luxuriance on its banks, and bent in twining arches across the murmuring current, was no longer there; but in its place lay heaps of smoking embers. The white odorous sassafras and slender tea tree mingled their ashes with those of the red light-wood and the yellow box. The hill down which we had come the day before, scarce able to force a passage through the thick undergrowth, presented now only long rows of grimy trunks standing in solitary desolation—gigantic mutes, mourners at nature's funeral rites.

The fire had only extended a short distance beyond the creek, confining its ravages principally to the range in which it had commenced; and as we turned to continue our journey, we could hear the distant roar of the flames, and the crashing of the burning forest far away. Though thankful and overjoyed at our escape, yet our position was by no means a pleasant one. The little stock of provisions was gone, but this was a trifling loss compared with that of our pocket compass, which had also disappeared; for, though rarely used by experienced bushmen in so short a journey as ours, yet our ignorance of the country through which lay our route, its hilly nature, and distance from the settled districts, rendered such a guide indispensable. The rare glimpses of the sun that reached us in the valleys were of little use in directing us, and the continual deviations necessitated by the deep gullies and steep precipices that we encountered soon completed our bewilderment.

The direct course of the place we wished to reach was about west-south-west; but by keeping too much to the westward we might go beyond our destination, and enter a part of the country that stretched away to the distant coast without a single settlement, and the greater portion of which has never been thoroughly explored. Once within that unknown district, our extrication was very improbable, and death from hunger would then be the certain termination of our wanderings; for the bush of Tasmania does not contain a single wild fruit capable of supporting life, and our slender stock of ammunition would soon be expended.

Under these circumstances we resolved to steer due south, a direction the most easily ascertained by the position of the sun, which in that country would of course be directly behind us at noonday, and one that must ultimately bring us to some part of the channel leading to Hobart Town, and probably to one of the farms or convict stations planted on its shores. In the course of the morning we shot a couple of parrots, and stopped on the bank of a small stream to cook and eat them, selecting a perfectly clear spot for our fire, and carefully extinguishing it when we resumed our journey. Two beautiful bronze-winged pigeons who favoured us with their company at dinner, and appeared anxious to ascertain what sort of animals we were who had thus intruded on their territory, were secured by a skilful shot from my companion, and served for supper.

On the following morning we climbed to the top of a high hill in the neighbourhood of our resting place, but no appearance of water was discernible; the view was one uninterrupted succession of wood-crowned hills and thickly-timbered hollows—a wavy sea of many-tinted foliage. On this day we caught an animal that is now rare in Tasmania, and which I then saw for the first time. It was a species of ant-eater, called by the settlers a porcupine, by naturalists the *echidna*. It is considerably larger than the English



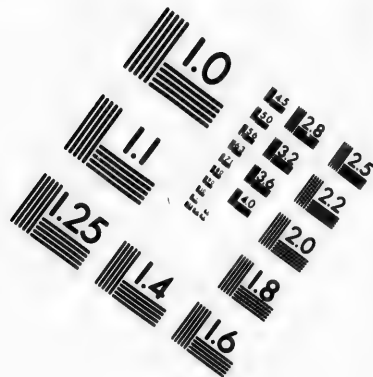
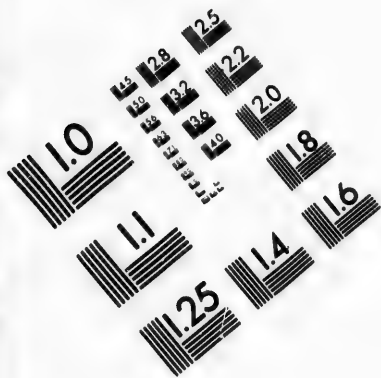
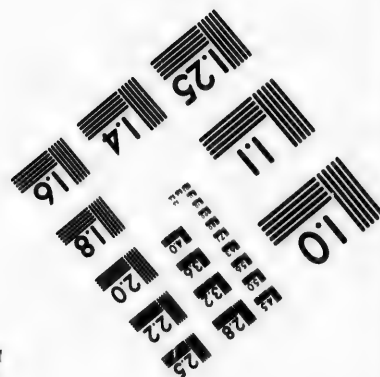
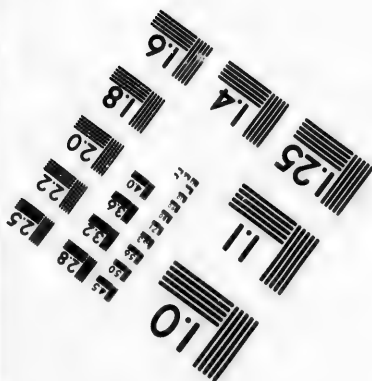
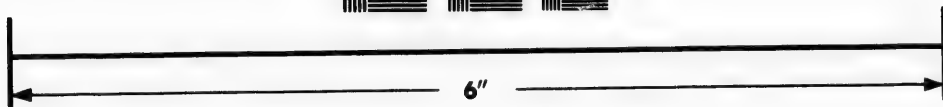
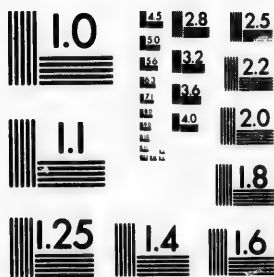


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hedgehog, but covered with a similar coat of strong bristles, interspersed with sharp thick quills, stouter but shorter than those of the African porcupine. Its long pointed head and powerful claws enabled it to burrow in the ground with great rapidity, and it adopted this mode of escape in the present instance, burying itself in the soft earth in a moment. But its progress underground was arrested by a blow from the butt-end of a gun; and as my comrade declared him to be excellent eating, we reserved the thorny gentleman for dinner. How to cook him was the next point for consideration, and we decided in favour of the mode in which bushmen always bake their bread or dampers, and which I had occasionally seen practised on a wild duck in Australia.

We chose for our bivouac a beautiful hollow, having in its centre a small circular lake, fed by a little stream that trickled from the hills. A thick border of tall reeds surrounded the lake, and its surface was dotted by numerous water-fowl, the graceful black swan and gorgeous mountain duck conspicuous among them. Here our porcupine was carefully enveloped in a thick coat of mud and clay, and buried in the centre of the fire, where we left him to bake at leisure in the hot ashes, whilst we crept down to the lake, and scattered a few shot amongst its plump inhabitants. When we returned the fire had burned down, and the muddy covering of our curious pie was baked into a hard crust, which, being broken off, brought with it quills and bristles, and left the porcupine divested of his armour and beautifully cooked. In appearance and flavour the flesh exactly resembles that of a sucking pig, for which, when cooked, the animal might easily have been mistaken; excepting that his nose terminated in a sharper point, and that his ears were exceedingly minute.

In the morning, after breakfasting on the remains of the baked porcupine, we left the lake loaded with game, and as we mounted the ridge looked anxiously around us, hoping to detect the silvery

glitter of the sea. But the same interminable expanse of foliage met our gaze, and hill above hill still rose on every hand. My boots, cracked by the fire, had dropped to pieces, and travelling over the pointed kangaroo grass and sharp dry twigs became extremely painful. Our clothes, already scorched to tinder by the heat, were torn to shreds, and fluttered round us a mere heap of rags. On this day, also, we found no water, and our miseries seemed approaching to a climax as we toiled slowly, towards night-fall, up a steep ridge of hills, hoping to find beyond them the much-wished-for stream. At length we stood upon the summit and looked down into the vale, and though no rippling brook offered its waters to our thirsty lips, a far more pleasing sight saluted us. Spread at our feet lay a broad expanse of water, a deep bay, down which a little craft was slowly dropping, her light sails scarce filled by the gentle evening breeze, and her long shadow broken and distorted by the merry leaping of the tiny waves, that danced and glittered in the golden sunlight. In a moment our fatigue was gone, our bleeding feet forgotten, and we were quickly standing on the quiet beach.

A single hail across the still water reached the vessel, and in return came the startled helmsman's loud halloo. A few words told our story, and the little boat towed astern was soon sculling towards the shore; and as the red gleam of the setting sun shot into the heavens, tinging the distant hills, and staining with ruddy glow the nearer waters, we stepped aboard the cumbered wood boat.

So circuitous had been our route, that though four days had elapsed since we started on our journey, we were only some eighteen miles from Hobart Town, the point at which we reached the channel being the head of North-west Bay. Such instances are common of men travelling many days in the bush, and yet only advancing a few miles towards their destination, impressed with the

idea that they are proceeding in a straight line, while they are continually wandering in a circle.

We were soon gliding over the surface of the silvery Derwent ; and as we lay at sunrise becalmed on its broad bosom, we could see, lowering above the distant ranges, a dense cloud of smoke, its long spiral wreaths still curling upwards from the valleys, winding amongst the summits of the hills, and spreading round them a dark gloomy curtain that fell in heavy folds above the scene of our adventure and formed a fitting pall for the black desolation we had left ; where many a mighty tree that had defied the attacks of storm and time lay now a heap of ashes, its massive trunk dwindled to a narrow line of light grey powder and red earth.

A STRIKING PROVIDENCE.

THE Rev. Mr. Thompson was well known, not only to the parishioners among whom he lived,* but to the neighbourhood at large, for the great liberality of his character. He was literally what Paul describes, "as poor, yet making many rich ; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

It was the uniform custom of this truly apostolic pastor, every year at the close of harvest, to distribute the surplus of his glebe among the poor of his parish, after first housing the necessary supply of his own little household, which consisted but of himself, a man-servant, and an old female housekeeper. It so happened, however, that one year a peculiar circumstance occurred which compelled him to depart from his usual plan. He had engaged, in the openness and generosity of his heart, to subscribe 30*l.* towards the expense of building a chapel in a distant town, where

* St. Gennys, in Cornwall, in the last century.

the parishioners were too numerous to be well accommodated in their own parish church. Having always the love of God and the salvation of souls in view, he did not regret his promise; but unable to raise the money by any other means than by breaking in upon the little hoard of his poor parishioners, he had no expedient but that of selling what heretofore he had always given away, and converting the corn into money to fulfil his engagement for the chapel. Instead, therefore, of calling his poor parishioners together, as usual, to take from his fields their harvest, he was obliged to invite some richer ones of the village to buy as much corn as would supply the 30*l*. which he had promised towards the erection of the chapel. The expedient was very painful to a man of his feelings, but the obligation seemed unavoidable.

Having by selling his corn obtained the money, Mr. Thompson left his home with an intention to be himself the bearer of his benefaction. In his journey, which was about twenty miles, he overtook on the road a young lady, mounted on a horse; and being a man of very cheerful and communicative manners, he accosted her with a degree of frankness which his age and profession might be supposed to authorize.

"Well overtaken," said he, "fair lady: will you accept of an old man for your companion over the down? I am too old indeed to promise you much protection; but I trust God will protect us both."

There was a certain something in the manner with which he said this, that the young lady, feeling a strong prepossession in his favour, immediately thanked him and accepted his company. She expressed much pleasure in his company, and as it appeared that they were both going to the same town, they trotted on together.

In the course of their conversation, which was about the best things, he told her his name, what a happy village of poor people his was, and how dear the parishioners were to him; but he avoided

saying anything which might lead her to imagine that their happiness resulted from his bounty, or that his conduct differed from that of his neighbours. When they arrived at the town and were about to part, he acquainted his fellow traveller with the name of the friend to whose house he was going, expressing at the same time his wish that he might see the young lady again.

The young lady was so much pleased with her companion on the road, that the same evening, in the course of conversation with her friends, to whose house she was come upon a visit, she could not help relating the circumstance respecting the very agreeable old clergyman she had met on the road, of the name of Thompson, and with how many pleasant subjects he had entertained her.

"Thompson!" cried the lady of the house; "I wonder whether he is a relation to the captain Thompson we have been so many years inquiring for in vain. I have 30*l*. tied up in a bag by my late husband, due to the captain, who ordered it to be left till called for. I suppose the captain is long since dead, and his executor, whoever he is, knows nothing of it."

"Who can tell," answered the young lady, "whether this Mr. Thompson may not be the very man? Suppose we send to call him hither?" The lady of the house consented to do so, and despatched a servant requesting the favour of his company, with which the good old man immediately complied.

In the course of conversation, the old lady of the house said she understood his name was Thompson, and desired to ask him if he knew of a captain Thompson, who was in the East India service. "Yes," said the old gentleman, "for he was my own brother." And he began to relate such circumstances of him as rendered the matter unquestionable.

The lady was rejoiced at the discovery. "For," said she, "my late husband bought a small garden from the late captain Thompson; and the captain hastening to sea before he had received the

money agreed for the purchase, the 30*l.* was left in his hands, which was put in a bag, waiting the captain's return. But this never took place. And at my husband's death, he left a strict charge to keep the money ready for him whenever he should call."

Mr. Thompson looked amazed at the discovery, his brother having been dead several years, and himself the only surviving relation, and the executor and residuary legatee of his effects. The first impression wrought upon his mind so soon as the lady of the house put the bag with the 30*l.* into his hand, was striking. He could not refrain, before them all, from breaking forth into expressions of devout gratitude to God; and falling upon his knees, with his eyes lifted up, he exclaimed, "Blessed be God! how gracious, how wonderful, thus to provide for my poor people at home! The money will be theirs again."

He hastened home to his friend, to inform him of what had happened; and so very full was his soul with joy on this occasion, that as he entered his house he cried out, "Praise God for ever! Our God is a faithful God." His host was astonished, and for the moment thought Mr. Thompson's mind was unhinged, so excited did he seem; but when his first paroxysm of joy had somewhat subsided, and he related the event, his friend, as well as himself, found cause to say, "What hath God wrought?"

THE END.

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